

"Ho! *Caramba!* I shall be killed! You Sphinx! murderess! Let me out of this! Help! help! or I shall beat my own brains out! I am going mad! Help!"

And while the dismayed Vargas roared and shouted, he bumped the back of his head on the floor till his teeth rattled, strained till his blood-vessels seemed ready to rupture. But suddenly he desisted. He heard a sound like the raising of a window-sash; then there was a strange voice, that called lowly:

"Coco Vargas?"

"Hey!" exclaimed the Spaniard, striving to glance round toward the window, but prevented by his bonds. "Who is that? *Caramba!* where are you?"

A noise like a leap from the window-sill, followed by a light step; then a man stood over him.

"Ho! The Devil! It is the model-maker!" he cried, in astonishment, as he recognized Gilbert Montrose, whom he had not seen since he resided in Cairo, near eleven years before.

"Hush!" said Montrose, frowning. "I have come to liberate you."

"Excellent!" and Vargas brightened wonderfully. "Clip off these bonds then, sir model-maker; you are an admirable fellow!"

"It was fortunate that I saw the cab and the parties that captured you on Elliott avenue. I was just about to enter the house of Francoise Ellory, whom I love—"

"Whom you love?" echoed Vargas, amazed. "Ho! I love her myself. Furies of thunder! Francoise Ellory is not for you!" and he rolled his eyes as he stared upward at the model-maker.

Montrose smiled, grimly.

"Coco Vargas, your life is in danger. I am the only person who can save you. Upon two conditions I will set you free."

"Conditions? What are the conditions?"

"First, you must swear never to aspire to the hand of my Francoise—"

"Your Francoise! *Caramba!*"

"Second, you must swear that, forever in the future, you will shun Favia Claremont, and utterly set aside your vow to destroy her."

"*Caramba!*" sputtered the helpless Vargas, again. "How can I do that? Sphinx! Sorcerer! I hate her!"

"I once loved Favia Claremont, and I judged her wrongly, which I have regretted. I saw enough of her, though, while looking in through that window, to make me care nothing for her now. Still I would be humane, and shield her from your merciless enmity."

"If you loved her once, love her again. Marry her. Clear out with her. I will not trouble her. So, help me out of this fix at once."

"You have heard my proposition," said Gilbert Montrose, folding his arms and calmly surveying the Spaniard. "Swear that you will give up all hopes of marrying Francoise Ellory, and leave St. Louis within a week; swear, too, that you will no longer pursue Favia Claremont. It is life or death to you. Choose."

"Francoise! my adored Francoise!" groaned Vargas. "But, no matter"—and his voice sharpened—"get me clear of this, and I promise what you ask."

"Swear it!" insisted Montrose; and as he spoke he knelt down and placed a cross-hilted dagger to the lips of Coco Vargas. "Swear by the Virgin, by your hopes of salvation, by Heaven and earth, your heart, your body, your soul, your sight, and by the sign of this holy cross!"

"I swear it by all!" growled Vargas, who repeated after him the conditions of his freedom.

The next instant the dagger, the cross he had kissed and sworn by, sundered the cords and straps that bound him, and he sprang to his feet with an oath.

In a twinkling they clambered from the window to the shedding of the bath-house, thence to a stout grape-rack—soon they were upon the street.

The Spaniard paused not to thank his deliverer, nor did he heed the reminder which Gilbert Montrose hallowed after him.

"Remember your oath! or beware my vengeance, Coco Vargas!" called Montrose; and he hurried away in the gloom.

Vargas was heading for the den of Jean Banquo.

He had not gone far before he met a man—not that there was anything remarkable in the mere fact—but this man stepped directly in front of him, and tapped him familiarly on the shoulder.

"Hello, fellow! who the dogs are you?" he growled, surly and snappish.

"I'm Dave, and you're Coco Vargas. Know me? Well, I've been scouring round ever since dark, hunking for you. This here's a most lucky find, by cracky!"

"Oh, you are Dave! You are 'one of us'?" and Vargas became familiar also. "You've been searching for me—for what, now?"

"Well, we've had a sort of accident. Guess you an' me'll have to fix that 'ere bank business by ourselves."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Captain Baxter was run over by a heavy wagon, just about dark, on Plum street. Guess he must 'a' been drunk, somehow. But that ain't just exactly it. You see he's hurt mighty bad, an', thinkin' he's goin' to die, he's rollin' on the bed and talkin' about ministers an' such."

"Ministers! *Caramba!*"

"He sort of acts like he wants to make a confession—"

"A confession! *Santissima!* he will ruin us!"

The ruffian nodded.

"And where is he? What have you done with him?"

"Looked him into his room—an' here's the key."

"Good! Let us get to him," and, to him self, as the ruffian nodded again and led the way: "A confession! *Caramba!* not if I can help it—the dog! Ho! a fine mess he'd make of it. I'll stop his mouth."

He strode after the man, in the direction of the house where their crippled pal was confined. But the forthcoming confession of this Captain Baxter was vastly different from what the two men anticipated—they reasonably supposing that he meant to divulge his alliance with them in the plot against the Merchants' Bank.

Retiring to another apartment, after leaving her captives, Favia Claremont found her two tools awaiting her.

"It is well done," she said. "Now then, one more task before I pay you." She seated herself at a small desk, and wrote briefly. Sealing the note and addressing it, she handed it, together with the document she had taken from Vargas, to Nelson, the longshoreman.

"Take this, instantly, to the chief of police, or to any other of the authorities. When you return, I will have your pay ready for you. Go—and hasten."

And when she was alone:

"This chance I will give Coco Vargas for his life. If, when he has served in jail, and has learned that the Sphinx can deal with him—if then, he persists in hounding on my track, I will shoot him down at first sight! He shall not live in my very company, as he has been doing at the gambling saloon for a whole month. Fool that I was to imagine he could not penetrate my mask! But he is in my power now. And so, Coco Vargas, the Sphinx has turned upon you at last; you have trailed her to your own destruction, instead of hers!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 237.)



AMOR VINCIT.

BY HENRY AUSTIN.

Tantalizing weakness!
Spell-bound—oh, for shame!
By a pair of blue eyes
Lit by love's bright flame!

How should I be stricken
By two love-lit eyes?
I, so philosophic,
I, so wondrous wise?

I, by pride elated,
Never dreamt, oh, no!
That a woman's fancy
Could my will subdue.

I to care for woman!
Who the sex adored;
Wondered what was in them
That could be adored:

Took them for pert triflers;
Painted butterflies;
Giddy laughers; mock-heroes,
Empty entities:

Laughed at tender glances,
Sneered at heaving sighs,
Looked on declarations
But as gilded lies:

Watched the gaudy shadows
In my state pride;
Smiled at their endeavors
Empty heads to hide.

Heartiest welcome smile they
On the rich man's son;
Noses turned up at him
When the play is done.

Pledging at the altar
Love that knows no death;
Making of the fireside
But a hell on earth—

Woman—I have called her
Quintessence of life
Taken to our bosoms
But to turn and kill;

Golden, roseate apple,
Core but poisoned ash;
Hollow, heartless nothing,
Born to lies and flash.

I had watched the mother
School her bright-eyed girl
How to lace her bodice,
How adjust a curl.

She, a willing pupil,
Scarcely needed art;
Mother Nature's taught her
Well to play her part;

And I thought that never
Girl would be to me
More than painted picture,
Pretty, true, to see!

Vase of Nature's carving,
Wondrous piece of art,
Study for a sculptor,
Thing without a heart!

And yet two tiny feet,
Patting along
Cause my heart to beat like
Drum in battle's throng.

Magnet ne'er was pole-witened
More than witched am I
By the follow lustre
Of a beaming eye.

And I would not give my
Love for all the loves
Ever turned half crazy
Wiser heads than Jove's.

She Who Dared.

BY LUCILLE C. HOLLIS.

"Oh, God!"

There was no irreverence in the tone or the words. They were wrung from Cuba Hensleigh's lips by bewildering agony of feeling. There was intense astonishment, an anguished moan of love, a mad, passionate protestation against a bitter fate, mingled in that forcible, half-suppressed cry. Then Cuba sat very still and looked out into the dusk, and at the man whom she loved with all the intensity and unchangeableness of which the real passion is capable.

Quite motionless she sat at the window, beside the forward door, motionless as when before, half dreamily, she had watched the twilight deepen in the wooded chasms, and along the rocky ledges, when the train was flinging itself onward with thundering reverberations. But no longer she heeded the moonlight sifting through the forest treetops and shimmering down upon the valley lakes, nor the stars coming out so pale and soft far above the noisy engine, nor the clouds of steam that lighted up so gorgeously when the fireman opened the doors to the fire under the great boiler.

It was while those doors were open, and the glare of the fire had pale the moonbeams, that a man had come through the car, gone out of the door at Miss Hensleigh's side, and stood full in the red glow.

He was a supple, well-shaped man, despite his coarse attire and blue-checked blouse; a handsome-faced man under the soot with which he was begrimed and the slouched hat drawn low over his forehead. He lifted one of the buckets from the tender, dipped it in the tank of water, and, placing it in front of him on the car platform, washed hands and face, all unconscious that within the half-dark and almost-deserted car one passenger watched him with face white as the dead and the stony motionlessness of a statue.

"He, Dyce Meade," Cuba Hensleigh was thinking. "The pride of Yale, a common brakeman! Can the world be ruled by anything but fate? Can there be a God, to permit such injustice? He is as innocent of any crime as the purest soul upon whom these moonbeams fall!"

At she thought this, she believed it, and she loved him!

But she never moved when he threw away the water, flung the painted bucket back in the tender, and came through the car, passing so near her that some of the drops from his hands fell upon her dark silk suit. She was thinking of when she had looked last on his face—raised to hear the verdict of the jury.

"Not proven." Only that!

How well her aching heart understood the haunted agony in his blue eyes, the spasm of pain that flitted like a pale shadow over his face, the momentary writhing of his firm hands. That, innocent though he was, he could welcome

a verdict of guilty rather than a reprieve to a life ruined, disgraced. If he had but looked across to where she sat, in her mourning-dress, and seen the trust, the love, the pleading, in her eyes. But no! he went away without one word. And now, after two years—here he was; and she had not made herself known to him, though he had passed so near her that she had but to lift her hand to lay it on his arm.

The engine gave a wild shriek; the cars groaned, and plunged, and were still; the voice of a brakeman—not Dyce Meade's—shouted the name of the station.

"Consella Manor!"

Miss Hensleigh looked through the dim car, then went out, and away from the man she loved as she knew she never could love another.

The cars steamed onward. Strong hands placed her in a waiting carriage and prancing horses bore her away from the lonely little depot along the moonlighted road to the Manor—the stately Consella mansion.

"I am astonished at your coming up alone, on this late train," said Cecil Consella, as they leaned against the softly-cushioned seats.

"Not very late," answered Miss Hensleigh, coolly; "only half-past eight."

"And you haven't said why you stayed?"

"And you have not asked."

"I do now, then. Did you not know that my mother would worry about you?"

"Very kind, but very unnecessary," said Miss Hensleigh, indifferently. "My lawyer was out of town, and, as I was obliged to wait, business delayed me. Of course you enjoyed the party to lake Echo."

"Without you?"

"Why not? I never trouble myself to be anything beyond intensely disagreeable."

"To me, no," and Cecil laughed a little satirically, "but it makes no difference, Cuba. You know me well enough to have learned that my love for you is not influenced in the least by your assumed indifference."

Cuba shivered slightly. It could not have been from the effects of the black eyes that gleamed down on her so fiercely, resolutely, triumphantly, for she was not looking at them; it could not have been the chill of the clear September night, for he had wrapped a splendid tiger-skin about her silks. But over this girl Cecil Consella had a strangely magnetic influence. She hated him, and took no trouble to conceal the fact, yet circumstances made him her constant companion, and she had no power to repel his attentions. She felt and dreaded his influence over her, but yielded to it without choice.

Cecil, watching her intently, continued:

"You know that I am determined to have you for my wife. That I ask no higher honor, no happier future, than to devote my life to you. May I not consider matters settled, and tell them all at home, tell aunt Hensleigh, that you are my betrothed?"

He passed his arm about her, and forced her to look in his face.

"Cecil, release me instantly! and take your answer—No!"

"Very well; if you choose to coquette a little longer, I am patient. It will all amount to the same in the end," and he freed her with a smile.

Would it amount to the same in the end? Miss Hensleigh asked herself the question with a horrible feeling of powerlessness to contend against the odds that were in Cecil Consella's favor: the wishes of her aristocratic family and his; the inferences that society had already drawn; her inherited caste pride and dread of notoriety; his strange will-power over her; and the hopelessness of his ever abandoning his resolves. Instinctively she had learned that Cecil, despite his earnest wooing, sought her for neither love nor money. Why then was he determined to marry her? Often she tried to analyze his motives and her own fears. Never with more despair than this evening, when the old love was flooding her heart, and she realized how impregnable were the barriers set between her and it.

"Cuba, off this morning! Where?" Cecil sauntered down late and met his cousin in the hall, in traveling attire.

"You a descendant of Eve?" cried Miss Hensleigh, with a finished bow, a smile, and a faint, irritating flavor of sarcasm, as she passed on to the carriage.

"Curse her!" muttered Cecil. "The sooner I make her my wife, and tame her, the better. Her hatred of me isn't safe, and I cannot comprehend it."

"Dyce! Mr. Meade!"

The late train had almost reached its destination. Only two stations more, and the next was Consella Manor. The handsome brakeman—who only went on the early and late trains—had finished his ablutions, and was passing through the cars, when a man greeted him which he had not heard in a weary time. As it seemed to him; not since it had been branded as the name of a murderer.

And the voice! It blanched his face colorless; it struck him motionless, dumb, and for a moment Miss Hensleigh could hear the beating of her frightened heart above the clatter of the iron-wheeled cars. It was she who broke forth in an agonized voice:

"Have you no word to say to me? Are you not glad to see me?"

The words struck him to fierce speech.

"Glad to see you? Great God! How can you torture me so? You, the last mortal in the world I would meet!"

A terrible fright and horror gathered in Miss Hensleigh's gray eyes.

"Surely you do not mean—you cannot have gone away because—Dyce, tell me! tell me!"

"Miss Hensleigh, if I were a guilty man, would I speak to you at all? They have not made you believe this?"

"Never!" She breathed freely again, and a faint flicker of color leaped to her white face as she understood, now, how intensely her passion was reciprocated. But it receded, with a throbb of agony that made her whole frame quiver, as she looked into the pallid face above her—the hair-raised blue eyes—and remembered that to both it could be but a life-long torture. But even the fact that she was a Hensleigh, and Dyce but a brakeman, a man branded with a crime that should have made intercourse between them impossible, could not make her leave him thus. They were fast nearing the station. She put her hand on the one that clenched the seat in front of her, and held it there a moment, detaining him.

"Dyce, as I believe in a God above us, I believe in your innocence! Prove to the world that you are so! Go back, and compel men to recognize, and esteem, and honor you!"

The warm, earnest words scarce moved the man from his apathy.

"It would be of no avail; no one would ever believe in me."

"I believe in you, Dyce!"

"Oh, God! I almost wish you hated me! It only makes it harder to bear; makes me more content to abide by this death in life that I have chosen. The only object that made life and work of any worth is unattainable! No, let me be!"

The whistle shrieked a "put on brakes," but Miss Hensleigh's hand closed forcibly on his, and she said, steadily, with all the pride of the Hensleighs in her clear, honest voice:

"I will not let you be until I have said, Dyce, go back to the world and work for my sake."

He rushed to his brakes. The train slackened, and Miss Hensleigh came out. Silently he gave her his hand to the platform, then, in the darkness, raised it to his lips, and whispered:

"Cuba, it cannot be! I will never ruin your life. I love it far beyond the worth of my own. I will not be even tempted again. Forget me—good-by—it is till death!"

The train was gone; the red glare of the engine lay along the track rods away, and Cecil Consella was leading his cousin to the carriage.

"Late again to-night, my darling."

She did not see the lurid fires in his eyes, did not heed the contradictory and unusual tenderness of his words. It needed all her powers to force herself to calmness, not dreaming that Cecil Consella had kept close espionage over her that day.

He put her in the carriage, she shivering slightly.

"It is very cold to-night."

He essayed to wrap a tiger-skin about her, but she took it from him, drew it about her shoulders, and leaned back in the furthest corner of the seat.

"Why so distrust this evening, sweet cousin?"

"I am very weary."

"Then find rest," he laughed, putting his arm about her.

"Cecil, touch me if you dare!" she cried, angrily.

"Not very cousinly," he said, imprisoning her hands. "Not very like my betrothed."

Miss Hensleigh straightened, haughtily.

"Why waste breath to mention an impossibility?"

"But it is not an impossibility! You know it is only a question of time as to when the betrothal made in our childhood shall be consummated. I've been talking to aunt Hensleigh, to-day, and as I intend spending the winter in Paris, we have agreed the wedding shall be next month. Of course mother and the girls are delighted, and all you have to do is to hasten arrangements."

He spoke so calmly, so assuredly, with that compelling magnetic gaze, willing her to obedience, that Cuba almost cried out in her wretchedness and terror.

With marvelous power she revolted against the dread influence, and replied, decidedly:

"Though the heavens may fall, I will not be compelled to marry a man I hate and despise as I do you, Cecil Consella!"

His eyes blazed with rage, and he answered, hotly:

"You shall never marry the man you love! You dare not give your hand to your brother's murderer! You dare not outrage the names of Hensleigh and Consella by such an alliance! Thank Heaven that I am willing to stoop to save you from the disgrace your low *amour* would bring upon you, if any knew it but me!"

Anger mated anger in Miss Hensleigh's answer.

"Cecil Consella, my cousin though you are, you shall live to rue the day you spoke such words to me!"

The forests, in their changing glory, hung damp and glistening, the mists curled in white wreaths over the valleys, the sun crept slowly up a path of crimson flames, as over the dew-wet rails, through rocky cuts, and under the wooded hillsides, flew Dyce Meade's train. His place was at the rear brakes, and as the train halted, and plunged away again, at Consella Manor, he watched the little depot with hungry, despairing eyes. He would never see it again. For her sake—the sake of the woman he worshipped—he must this day flee to some distant place.

The train sweeps around a curve, Consella Manor fades from view, and the cars rush along a gravel track with white bluffs on either side. Something dark sweeps to Meade's vision. He sees a woman clinging with almost superhuman power, with almost surety of instant death, to the iron rail of his platform. With one hand he swings to the last step, puts the other strong arm about the swaying figure, lifts her to safety, and flings himself, pale and breathless, by her side.

He speaks first, with one only thought.

"Thank God! you are safe! How dared you do it, Cuba?"

"I dare do anything," she answered, passionately, with cheeks suddenly kindling to flame.

"You will think so, perhaps will despise me, when I tell you why I thus risked my life."

Her head drooped, her voice died to a whisper.

"I want you to marry me."

"Merciful heavens! Impossible! Why tempt a man beyond power of mortal endurance, I cannot do it."

"You must!"

"You do not know what you are saying, Cuba. I, a man poor and in public opinion infamous, criminal, marry you—rich, aristocratic, the sister of the man for whose death I have been tried! All the powers of heaven and earth forbid such a union!"

"Earth, Dyce, not heaven. Listen! You shall hear me! I have risked life, nay, what is of a thousand times more value, maidenly honor, to ask this favor of you. You are innocent, and we love each other. Will you not save me from the miserable fate of marrying a man that I despise?"

"I must not! I must not!"

Great drops of agony stood on the man's brow, though he had an endurance that was almost divine.

"Then I will fling myself from this platform! I can die, but I can never marry Cecil Consella!"

"Cecil Consella! Perdition! Has that fiend asked you to be his wife?"

"Yes. We were betrothed by our parents in childhood, and he and our friends are resolved that I shall marry him. My mother refuses all intercourse with me if I disobey."

Dyce, white as a corpse, touched his lips to her forehead and opened the door.

"Go in, my wife."

Miss Hensleigh obeyed the words and motion; and, well-nigh dead with the terrible fatigue that her deed and excitement had wrought, sunk wearily in a seat to think of what she had done—she, heiress to five hundred thousand, and daughter of one of the wealthiest families of the State.

Did ever a woman dare more to marry the man she loved?

Something moved in the seat in front of Cuba. A little child flung aside a dark mantle, and sat upright, looking frightenedly around, his red lips quivering, and his sturdy voice calling:

"Uncle Dyce! Uncle Dyce!"

Meade was coming through the car. He took the little one in his arms and sat down beside Miss Hensleigh. The lady gazing at the two faces in wonderment.

"Dyce, I must be dreaming," she said, bewilderedly; "surely there never were two faces so much alike as this child and Neale's."

"It is Neale's boy."

"I do not understand you."

"Listen, then. You have a right to hear the story. While Neale was in college he fell desperately in love with a poor girl whom he privately married. It was the very night of Neale's death that she died. I was the only one who knew his secret, so I cared for the child. I loved Neale, and it gave me something to live for."

"Why did you never let us know?"

"Mrs. Hensleigh might not have cared to own the little one."

"Was not the girl respectable?"

"Oh! yes, and gentle, and pretty; here is her picture."

He drew an old-fashioned chain from beneath the little one's dress, that Cuba recognized as one her brother had worn on his watch when a boy, and handed Miss Hensleigh the open locket.

At sight of it a cry escaped her. "Dyce! Dyce! what does this mean? Tell me the truth! Cecil Consella wears this picture, always. His locket has a secret spring. I happened once to touch it. There was this face, and the name—Ella."

"Cecil loved her first. I suppose, madly and truly. He went traveling, in the mean time supported her, and was to marry her on his return. While he was away, Neale met, and loved her, and married her."

"And Cecil hated Neale for it?"

"Perhaps so."

"You shall not evade me! Why did you call Cecil Consella a fiend? I have strange thoughts. Is it possible—can it be—that my cousin was Neale's murderer?"

"There are few proofs."

"Answer me!" she cried, her eyes ablaze.

"You think so?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"When Cecil came home he sought Ella, who had long been silent. She gave him back his money and presents, and told him whose wife she was. He took a terrible oath that Neale's life should repay the treachery of cousin and sweetheart. That night this child was born, its mother died, and Neale was shot. Only an old grandmother lived with Ella, and even she did not know the girl's real name. So it was not until after the trial that I learned of Ella's death and the circumstances which previously transpired. Then I had some light upon Neale's mysterious death, and knew why Cecil Consella had suggested my arrest and trial."

"And you never tried to clear yourself?"

Miss Hensleigh asked, with stern, white face.

"I had no hope of ever winning you, and how could I believe that any suit of mine could be successful against the wealth of the Consellas?"

The train thundered into the city depot. At Miss Hensleigh's command, Dyce summoned a carriage and put her in.

"I have some business which I must attend," she explained, leaning toward him. "I will send you a note to-day or to-morrow, appointing a time and place for our marriage ceremony. You will abide by my arrangements?"

"I will, Cuba. Not pride—nothing but death—shall stand between us now."

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and with these two, whose reappearance will give new zest to their unique exploits, viz.: The Man from Red Dog, Joe Bowers, the Bummer, both of whom are creations who will stand as originals not likely soon to be forgotten.

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The Dread White Rider!

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WEIRD-LIKE, STRANGE AND ENTHRALLING!

The Arm-Chair.

A LADY contributor, speaking of matters literary, says: "As I get older I become more diffident in my style, and find it difficult to abbreviate," etc., etc.

Which is not an encouraging prospect for publishers, who demand what is graphic; and it is not the proper order of progress. As authors grow in practice the study should be to attain a clear, concise and graceful style—which a suffusion of adjectives, and diffusion of conjunctions, and effusion of figures of fancy never can become.

To use six words for expressing an idea or fact when five well-chosen words make a clearer and more impressive impression is one of the common mistakes of journalists and literateurs.

It only goes to show the wretched neglect of elementary instruction in our schools. A teacher who teaches precision in expression is a rare sight to see in "common" or "high" schools, while the greatest adepts in diffuse and redundant talk are your college professors.

Men found scholarships, donate immense sums to endow a favorite college, bestow benefactions on libraries and art galleries, but of all the long list of such beneficiaries not one has given a cent to directly encourage the correct use of their own language. Won't some one, having more money than his relatives can conscientiously accept, lay aside enough to found a Professorship of Common Sense and Good English in any one of our millionaire colleges? He will doubtless be voted a "visionary," but a race of boys will rise up and call him blessed.

"If you do not use the sketch," writes a contributor, "please inform me by postal card and I will send postage for return."

This is just what we ought not to be asked to do. To comply compels us to correspond with the author, to lay aside the *Ms.* for preservation, to await a future order, and, when it comes, to overhaul the *Ms.* and pass it over to the mail clerk for return. Or, if the stamps don't come, there is the *Ms.* to keep on hand for weeks, or months, subject to order.

Business compels the final disposition of manuscripts, by the editor, the moment they are accepted or declined. When once the contribution has passed his hands, he cannot, without inconvenience and loss of time, recur to it again. Hence the request made of every writer for the press: "Those who wish their declined contributions returned must have stamps enclosed for such return. No manuscript can be held for future order."

If contributors only would accept this as final, it would save the editor a deal of trouble, and preserve many a manuscript from destruction—put into the waste-basket, after reading and rejection, because the editor cannot be bothered about it again.

Sunshine Papers.

Ruminations—Caninely.

MAJOR—Not Major Somebody, only Major—was a dog; a nice dog, too. A Newfoundland—large, and glossy, and shaggy, with a face that looked as if he knew something. Oh, such a superior dog to Mrs. Brainless's shivering, snapping little spaniel, and Miss Follie's nasty, red-eyed poodle!

Major was a chance acquaintance. He used to pop out from a house I was forced to pass daily, and trot by my side some distance.

I hate dogs! (with due deference to your memory I say, Major.)

I never indulge in anticipatory worryings concerning any other death, but I can not but be a little myself into thinking I could endure hydrophobia philosophically. But, if ever I have it, may I not get it from a poodle, but from a dog that is a dog (was, rather; he's dead now, poor fellow!) like Major. That is what I used to think when Major first frightened me into a desire to scream, by honoring me with his espionage. But after a time we got to know each other so well, Major and I, that I could give him quite a calm greeting of a morning, and almost a cheerful one when the train was late, and, walking home in the dusk, he would meet me half-way and stay by my side a few minutes.

One night I was later than usual, alone, and the evening stormy. I was really glad when I reached the house where Major abode and he came pattering out to me. We had not gone far when a form loomed through the darkness and nearly reeled against me. Instinctively I put my hand upon Major's head. At that moment my hatred of dogs and fears of hydrophobia were insignificant compared to my horror of a drunken man and dread of reason ruled by alcoholic fiends. The man halted and uttered a curse; the dog crouched low, with a warning growl. My *vis-a-vis* hurried away, and Major escorted me quite home, holding a bit of my dress in his mouth.

Always after that he was waiting at the depot, took hold of my dress, and walked to my gate.

In the winter I only saw Major weekly. One Saturday, stopping a moment to pat him, I learned from a boy at the gate that my canine cavalier had done more than growl at a drunken man. He had saved his mistress' little girl from drowning under the treacherous ice of the river.

Toward spring I missed Major. Making inquiries, I learned that a butcher had killed the dog, for stealing meat from his cart.

Such a disgraceful death to record of such a brave dog, and the only one I ever did tolerate!

I might have repeated, "I never nursed a dear gazelle," etc., and dropped a tear had I been sentimental; but instead, I reflected—"one dog that cannot give me hydrophobia."

And yet, Major, old fellow, with all my dread of your race, I acknowledge that they have many good qualities. I remember your good deeds reverently, and recall what a comfort your presence was to me occasionally.

Sometimes, now, when I feel a shiver of fear creep over me at the approach of some canine specimen, I remember you, and say a pleasant word to the animal for your sake. The larger the dog the easier the task; but the little ones—

Oh, Major! did not you yourself dislike the little dogs? The hateful, barking, snapping, diminutive curs that rush at one's heels and berate one noisily?

No, you did not. I recall a scene when a coxcombical little cur sought to annoy and brow-beat you with his egotistical parade and noise. You walked along as if equally calmly unconscious of his presence and that he was backing you, which he certainly was, for I saw him give several vicious nips at your heels. But let me tell you, Major, had you been a scale or two higher in the animal kingdom, could you have walked on two feet and spoken "The king's English," (with or without regard to Richard Grant White), you would not have been so sublimely indifferent. At least, I'm afraid you would not have been; for, Major, it is exceedingly hard for individuals to pass by the annoyances of little dogs as you were wont to pass them by.

Old fellow, was it a consciousness of superior worth, of unassailable reputation, that the curs sought to attract attention to themselves by noisily berating you, that the very reason they barked was because they dared not bite, that made you so grandly calm?

Ah! you are powerless to make the truth known; but that it was, beyond doubt. And, Major, I wish there were thousands of men and women like you, old fellow—kind in heart, brave in deed, calmly superior to the maliciousness of brainless fops and narrow-minded, carping critics. I do believe there are a few. And may we all, the owners and oppressors of your race, like you, treat with supreme indifference, kind pity even, those who seek to annoy and injure us!

Yes; by a life devoted to the acquiring of worthy habits, Christian graces, an honorable name, a consciousness of rectitude, we can bear calumny calmly and pity those who stain their hands with mud with which they would fain soil us.

That is a lesson worth learning, Major! How glorious it would be if every girl and boy who sends Fido to "fetch a stick," and teaches Prince to "shake hands," would comprehend it and aim through school life and after graduation into the *beau monde*, politics, and on 'change, to be beyond the bite and superior to the bark of the small dogs of society. Not that all small dogs are of that one class. There are the curled, bedecked, blanketed little poodles!

Are they disgusting, Major? But I despise their enervated, shallow, soulless mistresses even more than I do the little beasts! (I record that, Major, from a desire to be just to all your kinship.)

The women who roll along in their carriages, their pampered pets blanketed and cuddled upon their laps, and just a stone's throw away are little hollow-eyed babes, white and ghastly for want of nourishment; their tiny limbs pinched with cold under their scant covering; their heavy lids drooping over glassy eyes that look in vain for maternal care and food; their nurse some little brother or sister, itself almost a babe; mother meanwhile toils ten weary hours daily to keep a wretched shelter over the little ones' heads. If the dames of favoring fortune could see these sights as I have seen them, Major, think you they would lavish their scores of dollars on costly pets to be fed with bon-bons and wrapped in shawls, while little soul-endowed children, precious jewels of genius, mayhap, starved and died?

Let us hope not! Let us hope not!

Major, dog though you were, you could teach many a lesson to us your superiors, and—

"He was killed for stealing!"

Yes, my dear sir, your sarcastic reminder of my hero's sad fate is correct; he was! Perhaps, sir, you are a statesman of unblemished character; Major's character was stainless until the unlucky day of his demise; then be careful that you die not under a Credit Mobilier scandal!

Even in Major's death we learn: none of the earth earthy are above temptation: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

SOME FOLKS I KNOW.

I know a certain young female who actually makes the boast that she has never done any kind of work for a living; that she has never had to sweep or dust a room, lest it should hurt her form. Is there any great merit in this? Is it so grand a virtue that she must needs brag about it? By-and-by she'll tell me that any kind of work is degrading; but she'll not make me believe it for all that. I never have entertained that opinion, and I'm not inclined to do so now. I also know that girl's mother, and that she has to dig and delve, scrub and scour until her bones ache and her body becomes weary. I think Miss Goodform had better be helping her mother than boasting of "not being obliged to work for a living."

I know a young woman who might have been the wife of a young mechanic and have enjoyed a very comfortable life, who is now working at a trade early and late. If she had married the mechanic in question he could not have supported her mother and crippled sister, as she is now doing, and what would have become of them? I'm sure so good a girl as that *ought* to succeed. Perhaps her form may be a little bent by stooping over her work, but her heart is not so deformed by pride as the female with whom I commenced this essay. I know which I love the best.

I know a young lady who declined to accept the hand and heart of a very worthy young fellow who "dabbled" a bit in literature. She said she could never love one who spent his leisure-time in scribbling for the papers.

Such a lack of work, and that they can find nothing whatever to do, when they could have employment enough if they would but accept it. But they won't, because it is work that might soil their hands; and it does seem to me oftentimes, that many would prefer to stave to death rather than do that. Supporting work does stain one's hands: are not soap and water cheap enough?

When I hear of people refusing to do work because it might soil one's clothes and hands, I'm inclined to believe they are a little bit too particular, and I'd not like to have them for correspondents for fear they might get a spot of ink on their delicate fingers, and ruin their reputations for life! Wouldn't it be fun to see one of these over-cleanly persons fall into an ink-vat!

I know of a great many folks who are willing to wear their old clothes a while longer in preference to going into debt for new ones; and I know others who wear unpaid-for garments, who cruelly cut their whom I have just mentioned; and, between us, I know which have the easiest consciences—perhaps you do, too.

I know some very worthy folks who do many deeds of kindness, say many a word of encouragement, who are not considered to be so very benevolent because they do not blazon forth their charities to the world, or let the world find out that theirs is the true benevolence. They prefer the thanks, prayers and blessings of the poor to the most fulsome newspaper puff—and that's where they are right.

I know a few fellows who are willing enough to talk about how the reforming of certain individuals ought to be brought about; but I find that they are not so very willing to do anything toward effecting that reformation; they won't give their hand to help the fallen one out of the mire, but they'll tuck their skirts around them to escape contamination, and give a few dollars to some one else to do it, and then they consider themselves very good and very charitable. Did the Savior pass the fallen woman and let others take care of her? Did He fear the contamination you so much dread? No; He did not; then, why should you?

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

My First Tragedy.

I WAS a young man in the heyday and straw-day of life when I produced my first tragedy, but it was brought out in all the glory of gas at the Blank theater on the opening night.

Everything was crowded. I was full myself, though I must say that my pocketbook was twice as empty as it could possibly be.

This new tragedy drew great crowds, and a vast number of people turned away, though the selling of tickets didn't stop.

When the curtain went up, after repeated efforts not to go up, the audience nearly went up, too, to see the hero and heroine hoeing potatoes together. He had the classical pug nose without boots, and she the dramatic red head without shoes.

When, after a thrilling conversation about

blue skies and gentle zephyrs and supper-time, he stepped on her sore toe and she pounded him with the hoe-handle, his scream of pain and dramatic rage were very effective and brought down the house; at least it brought down several lamp-chimneys and stoga boots.

When this passage was rendered with all the power of the actor:

"Malinda Melitabel, if this is love— To lose my appetite for eatables, To bear the whips and scorns of an outrageous father,

Because I show indifference to work; To neglect every day the pigs; To think of these while I forget my prayers, And sleep to dream of nightmares and of thee; To look on your old shoes with reverence, Then I'm in love, say, several hundred feet."

And she replied:

"Well, Charles Augustus Ninoncomb, Your words are like whole bucketsful of balm, And if your yearly income is enough To take me off to the ice-cream saloons, And pay for peanuts and for lozenges, Then no objection to your love I'll make."

I say when this was rendered there was the wildest stamping that ever was heard. I might add, just here, that the manager had sixteen snipes under the floor to pound against it and assist in the applause.

The tragedy had ten acts, and six scenes to each act. The manager wanted to know why the thunder I didn't make it longer, but I apologized and told him I had run out of material, but I might yet add a few more acts.

In the second scene, when the young man gets kicked out of the house by the old governor, the most thrilling interest was excited, and the author was called out. That is to say, one fellow who had left the audience seat up for me to come out—he wanted to lick me, as he thought that last scene was an insinuation on him, for he had been there a few nights before. I didn't go out for fun.

In the third act, where a jealous rival kills the hero and heroine by stabbing them both with a corn-cutter, tears flowed around among the audience, and they loudly called for the author; they said they wanted to kill him too. But, in the fourth act, when our hero—(bear in mind that both the hero and heroine were brought to by a good Samaritan corn-doctor who happened to be passing along on his way to attend a patient who had such a corn he hadn't worn his boots for a week), when our hero engaged in a battle where forty persons are killed, besides a member of Congress and some supernumeraries, and has both his ears shot off by one ball, the audience couldn't hold themselves and had to hire darkies to hold them.

In the next act the Prince (remember, he had put on a clean shirt and made himself known) took passage for Coney Island, but on the way he got sea-sick and fell overboard, and was swallowed by a whale. The heroine jumps over and is swallowed too, declaring she will follow him but this act was left out, as whales were very scarce that season and we couldn't borrow one for the occasion.

In the sixth act the Prince engaged in a single-handed contest with six cavaliers, who sallied out of castle Five Points, and slew them all. In this whole sixth act there were only thirty-nine persons killed. The manager said ought to have had more blood and butchery in it; but if there is anything I supremely despise it is to see a tragedy with so much blood and thunder in it. It isn't nice, and it doesn't come up to my ideas of true art. In this, Shakespeare and I have one mind.

In the seventh act, the scene where the Prince was chased by a rhinoceros had to be omitted, as no rhinoceros was on hand.

The eighth and ninth acts were left out at the request of the audience, who wanted to get home before daylight.

During the play I modestly sat on the front of the stage to the left, where I could note the effect it had on the audience; but it was something strange that they would laugh at the serious parts and groan at the humorous passages. I sat up there on the stage, too, so I could pick up what bouquets might be thrown without much trouble, but there were no flowers in that part of the city, I guess. The curtain rose, and that was all the rest I saw.

The last act concluded the piece. Toward the end the characters got to be so wicked that I thought best to kill them off, which was done by the explosion of a barrel of powder under the stage.

That tragedy had the greatest run on record. It was run off of that stage. It ran to South America. It ran to the island of Madagascar, and it is still running, and I don't think that it will ever stop.

The King of Dahomey has depopulated half his kingdom with that play—he has it acted to life. But if I ever write another tragedy, I'll put more tragedy in it.

Yours, tragically,

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

WHAT TO WEAR: TRIMMINGS.

In the Fall Styles a certain novelties which will prove popular with the best-dressed, and among them must first be mentioned the jet fringes and mountings—which seem literally to be "all the rage." Everything in the way of wearing apparel for ladies is literally laden with jet. The bonnets and hats are made heavy with it, the costumes are absolutely covered with it, the basques are glistening all over with cut jets, bugles and fringes. Buckles and fancy belts are also hidden with the quantities of this showy and not always elegant garniture. Jet indeed is the trimming of the moment, but how long it will last remains to be seen. Nothing is so common as a profusion of cheap jet ornaments, and nothing is less durable. The finer quality of jet is very expensive and a great deal of time is expended in designing the various patterns, but the very best of it is undurable, and only those who have means in plenty ought to invest in it.

Great care should be taken in selecting the jet fringes which will be so generally used on costumes this fall. The better qualities of French goods are of course rather expensive, but there will be plenty of imitations at lower prices in American and German goods, which will not wear well, and nothing can be more vexatious than to find a handsome dress completely spoiled after having been worn two or three times only, because the trimmings on it are falling in pieces.

Watered ribbon continues just as popular as ever for sashes and bows, and will be used during the winter on dresses of silk and velvet. Many of the sashes are very narrow, and match the bows on other portions of the skirt. The ends, however, are not long, double loops being substituted. When a wide sash is used, it is very wide, and serves for the large puff at the back.

To Our Readers.—All who wish their friends to enjoy the reading of Mrs. MAY AGNES FLEMING's splendid serial story, "AN AWFUL MYSTERY," will please have them call upon my news-dealer for free copies of the GIFT NUMBER, containing the first chapters of the great novel.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No *Ms.* received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No *Ms.* preserved for future order.—Unavailable *Ms.* promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book *Ms.*,"—*Ms.* which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit, and second upon the quality of the *Ms.*—"Copy," "third," "length," Of two *Ms.* of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note also paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, bearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many *Ms.* unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to correspondence. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Of the most recent offerings we can only accept: "An Enrapture," "Venus," "Love's Token," "A Rogue's Game," "Old Joe's Story," "Linnio's Will," "Compassion," "Life's Sorrows," "Lines to One," etc.; "The Home That is Home No More," "A Foot Race for a Fool," "The Blood of the Dragon," "Reasons," "She Was Willing," "The Peon's Fate," "Old Grove Tansey's Red Wife."

The following are declined—several being well worth publication, but for which we can not find the necessary space: "Disfigured for Life," "The Innocent for the Guilty," "The Lion's Safe," "How Nellie Deane Went to Market," "Ben Benton's Courtship," "Down at Bentley Place," "A Foot Race for a Fool," "The Blood of the Dragon," "Reasons," "She Was Willing," "The Peon's Fate," "Old Grove Tansey's Red Wife."

Mrs. M. D. The lady named resides in Brooklyn, N. Y. She is not a widow.

Mary Boye. Get up a reading club and call it the Saturday Journal club.

LIZZIE PENN. Shun a school that knowingly permits the girls and boys to correspond.

Miss J. S. See our Woman's World for the hints you ask for. See also last week's paper.

THOMAS ASH. Mr. Lincoln was not born in Illinois but in Kentucky. His parents moved to Illinois when he was a boy.

A. L. O. A good shot-gun can be had for \$18. Breach-loaders cost twice more than muzzle-loading, old style.

THOS. K. A mule is a hybrid, and does not propagate or reproduce. Only one instance is known of such reproduction.

E. B. writes: "Noticing that the 'Country Boy' said he could beat the Chicago Boy's running time of eighteen feet, I wish to ask how far can either of them jump in one or two straight standing jumps? Please let us hear from you as soon as you can."

C. S. H. Use emery and oil to get rid of rust on steel. To put gloss on shirt bosoms, drop a bit of sperm in the starch, or use the satiny-gloss starch. A very simple mode is to stir the starch with dissolved starch with a sperm candle for a moment.

THREE RIVERS. A debating club is very easily organized. Get a half-dozen boys together, and go to work. Beadle's Dime Debater and Chairman's Guide contains all the information you need, even to the constitution and by-laws of such a club.

BEX O'D. The buffaloes are being destroyed at about the rate of 200,000 per year, and as their "range" is constantly narrowing, we are "cared" that twenty-five years hence the animal will be wholly driven to the wild regions of the Upper Missouri.

MISS MINNIE H. asks why married women on the stage retain their maiden names. All do not do so. Where the stage name becomes popular, there is too much money in it to change. See Logan's Mrs. Wirt Sikes, Miss Neilson, Mrs. Lee, Miss Henriques is Mrs. Jennings, etc. etc.

O. W. R. S. We already have given good cures for catarrh. See late issue (p. 318). You can only cure your defects from a systematic course of study under a good teacher. No one book can do you any good.—The way to succeed in any good resolve is to stick to it. No bad habit can be broken except by the greatest decision.

MRS. DOTY, JR. To keep honey all the year round, let it run through a sieve to separate it from the particles of wax; put it in a glass jar, and seal it with a vessel; skim off the foam which gathers on top and cool in jars. After covering these tightly, set them away in a cool cellar.

LIROO asks: "What is the origin of the term 'dragon'?" There is a wide difference of opinion among military writers on the point. The dictionary and etymologists have generally accepted the fanciful derivation given about the beginning of last century, from *draco*, a dragon, because the first dragons, being mounted archbushers, carrying their lighted torches in a dragon's head, and their dragons, with a train of sparks behind them. A more reasonable derivation, from the same root, *draco*, is found in Markland's "A History of the Dragon," 1620. Speaking of the arms of the horse-soldiers, he mentions "a fayre dragon, eighteen inches in the barrel," and soon after calls the bearers "dragons." We know that the dragons were classified by the names of the monsters that were carved or cast on their muzzles, such as *sal-cornu*, from the fact that they carried horns; *colubrina*, a snake, on account of the snake's head; and finally the *dragon*, from the dragon's head. We know also that the troops using different weapons were first called after their depredations, viz.: "biniers," "pistoliers," "lançers," "arquebustiers," "musketeers." The name of "dragonier" was changed in course of time, and the last word that survives in German as "dragoner." Markham is the earliest writer who mentions dragons, and the fanciful derivation did not arise till at least a century later. Having mentioned the name of Pistoja, in Italy, where they were first made, as bayonets do for the same reason, from Bayona.

LILIAN inquires: "How can one tell the difference between a venomous snake and one that is not poisonous, at a glance? I am afraid of all snakes, and my brother has been bitten by one, and says that the bite garter-snakes won't hurt any one. Now, I want to know how to tell the difference." In all but our extreme Southern States there is but a single poisonous snake, and he carries his mark with him, which is perfectly easy of recognition. This is the well-known rattlesnake, which can be heard before it is seen. In the swamps of the South are found the moccasins and copperhead, even more deadly in their bite. One general distinction is almost universal: venomous snakes are in the body and sluggish in their motions. They have peculiar, angular heads in most cases, but are always very thick in proportion to length. Non-venomous snakes are all *constrictors*, long and thin, very rapid in motion, and generally colored to correspond with their surroundings. The garter-snake is a harmless little creature, lived in the grass and bushes, and very much resembles the dry grass and bushes among which he is found. The black-snake is so much larger as to be troublesome around hen-roosts, stealing eggs, etc., but he generally pays for his depredations by killing the rats and mice in the barns. It is a great mistake for farmers to kill either black-snakes or garter-snakes, which do more good than any other snakes.

CHARLEY wants to know: "What is meant by the different names, as applied to horse-soldiers, of cuirassier, dragon, uhlan, hussar, chasseur, carabineer, and lancer?" Also, what is meant by the medieval stories? The arms arose from the difference in size between men and horses, and the difference in armament. For convenience, the big horses and big men, in European armies, are separated from the little horses and little men. This causes the first distinction between "heavy" and "light" cavalry. The "man-at-arms" of olden days was a big man on a big, heavy horse, both covered with armor, the man carrying a lance, sword and battle-axe. The only difference between him and a knight was, that the last was of a noble family, wore gold spurs and handsome armor, and was called "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." (By the way, this reminds us of the last war, when a habit of putting an emphasis on this title, in speaking of English knights and barons found in books, saying "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." This is wrong. The word "Sir" should be left unemphasized, the Christian name being emphasized, as "John," or "Robert.") After the invention of fire-arms, heavy armor was no longer useful. No more man-at-arms in medieval stories! The arms arose from the difference in size between men and horses, and the difference in armament. For convenience, the big horses and big men, in European armies, are separated from the little horses and little men. This causes the first distinction between "heavy" and "light" cavalry. The "man-at-arms" of olden days was a big man on a big, heavy horse, both covered with armor, the man carrying a lance, sword and battle-axe. The only difference between him and a knight was, that the last was of a noble family, wore gold spurs and handsome armor, and was called "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." (By the way, this reminds us of the last war, when a habit of putting an emphasis on this title, in speaking of English knights and barons found in books, saying "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." This is wrong. The word "Sir" should be left unemphasized, the Christian name being emphasized, as "John," or "Robert.") After the invention of fire-arms, heavy armor was no longer useful. No more man-at-arms in medieval stories! The arms arose from the difference in size between men and horses, and the difference in armament. For convenience, the big horses and big men, in European armies, are separated from the little horses and little men. This causes the first distinction between "heavy" and "light" cavalry. The "man-at-arms" of olden days was a big man on a big, heavy horse, both covered with armor, the man carrying a lance, sword and battle-axe. The only difference between him and a knight was, that the last was of a noble family, wore gold spurs and handsome armor, and was called "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." (By the way, this reminds us of the last war, when a habit of putting an emphasis on this title, in speaking of English knights and barons found in books, saying "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." This is wrong. The word "Sir" should be left unemphasized, the Christian name being emphasized, as "John," or "Robert.") After the invention of fire-arms, heavy armor was no longer useful. No more man-at-arms in medieval stories! The arms arose from the difference in size between men and horses, and the difference in armament. For convenience, the big horses and big men, in European armies, are separated from the little horses and little men. This causes the first distinction between "heavy" and "light" cavalry. The "man-at-arms" of olden days was a big man on a big, heavy horse, both covered with armor, the man carrying a lance, sword and battle-axe. The only difference between him and a knight was, that the last was of a noble family, wore gold spurs and handsome armor, and was called "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." (By the way, this reminds us of the last war, when a habit of putting an emphasis on this title, in speaking of English knights and barons found in books, saying "Sir John," or "Sir Robert." This is wrong. The word "Sir" should be left unemphasized, the Christian name being emphasized, as "John," or "Robert.") After the invention of fire-arms, heavy armor was no longer useful. No more man-at-arms in medieval stories! The arms arose from the difference in size between men and horses, and the difference in armament. For convenience, the big horses and big men, in European armies, are separated from the little horses and little men. This causes the first distinction between "heavy" and "light" cavalry. The "man-at-arms" of olden days was a big man on a big, heavy horse, both covered with armor, the man carrying a lance, sword and battle-axe. The only difference between him and a knight

COQUETTED.

BY CRAPE MYRTLE.

And is it thus that we must sever
The bonds of affection wrought?
And must I lose this pearl of light,
My soul in faith hath sought?
The charming fashion of thy face
Bound, like a spell, my heart,
And, now that fickle fancy tires,
You say that we must part.

The stars in yonder Orient
Seemed not more true than thee;
But, ah! what treacherous changes
Sweep o'er life's checkered sea!
False lips, and fair as numerous
As Valambrosa's leaves,
Are the rows you make, and lightly break,
And fond, true hearts deceive.

The rich wine glowed on either cheek,
And the brightness of thy eye,
Bespoke what faithless memory,
Your lips did not deny.
Ah! brightening eye! ah! tender lip!
I deemed them fond and true,
But clouds will sometimes quench the light
From heaven's fairest blue.

And now, farewell, I will not pine,
O'er wasted moments of old;
My manhood craveth constancy,
As misers love their gold.
For all thy faithless woman's troth,
My full, free pardon's granted;
For love's young dream is buried deep,
And my soul is disenchanted.

The Moor-Captives:

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF THREE YOUNG LADIES.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE BETROTHAL.

AGAIN we stand in a splendid apartment of the imperial palace, furnished and decorated with the utmost magnificence and Asiatic splendor.

The emperor was seated on a couch, surrounded by a canopy.

Male and female slaves stood around.

The emperor was smoking.

Except for this he appeared far more astute than anything else.

All the rest imitated his immobility.

"Has the moollah been summoned?" he said, at last.

"He is here, your imperial highness," replied the moollah, in the full robes of his priestly office, advancing and bowing to the ground; "I await your highness' orders."

The emperor waved his hands, and all the attendants, male and female, retreated out of hearing.

"You have seen and spoken with those three Feringhee girls?" he said, coldly.

"By your orders, yes."

"And are they now aware of the great honor which is done them?" said the monarch.

"They still pine for their native land, and desire to remain faithful to their religion," was the quiet reply.

"Allah kerim! who ever heard of women having any religion?" said the emperor, with a gloomy frown. "Have they become ugly?"

This was said by him in an extremely anxious tone.

"They are fair and handsome," was the answer.

"Oh, moollah, it appears to me that you are faint-hearted in this matter," began the emperor, in a cold and saturnine tone; "I fancy that you show lukewarmness toward your adopted religion."

"I know the penalty of such folly," was the cold reply.

"I am glad that you remember it," continued the other; "now hearken to the words of wisdom. To-night shall take place the betrothal—to-morrow or next day the actual marriage."

"Yes, your highness."

"Let the stars decide which of the two days; but let no malignant influence interfere to delay my wishes," said the despot, significantly. "Let the women dance."

The moollah respectfully saluted his sovereign, and withdrew, as if in deep meditation, to an alcove, while the dancers displayed their antics before the sated tyrant.

"Enough," he said, after looking on with a bitter air; "there is naught amuses me now."

At this moment an attendant entered with a white and terror-stricken face.

"What ails thee, fool?"

"We have just taken a prisoner in the harem," cried the other, kneeling abjectly.

The moollah flushed crimson.

Could any of the trio have risked themselves again?

But show any sign of interest even he dared not.

"A prisoner in the sacred precincts of the harem!" cried the enraged monarch.

"Yes, your dread highness. A young man—a Greek. He was caught just now, in the garden, as he dropped from the Lady Medora's window."

The awful scowl on the emperor's face was enough to make any one tremble.

His brow was black as midnight, his features convulsed with passion.

"Bring him forward," was the hoarse cry; "and you, Hadji Bey, go, bring the woman here."

The officer bowed low and retired.

Then a tall, dark and handsome youth was brought before the emperor, guarded and fettered.

The moollah saw at once that it was no one he knew.

But his undaunted bearing and handsome mien interested him in his favor.

"Audacious slave!" cried the savage monarch, boiling with rage, "declare your purpose. What foul, felonious purpose was yours in daring to invade the sacred precincts of my harem?"

"None that will live with you, haughty voluptuary, who live by rapine," he said.

The emperor stared, as if he did not understand.

Such language was beyond his comprehension.

"What sought you here?" he gasped.

"My wife," was the cold answer. "I came to rescue all of value I possessed, taken from me by a robber."

"Your wife?"

"Yes. Medora was my young and adored wife, stolen from the Greek island to which I had carried her, by the fiend Suleiman," continued the youth; "I followed her through perils innumerable."

The emperor looked at him with a cold, sarcastic smile.

"You have come in search of your wife?" he said. "You shall not be separated from her. Lo! here she comes."

As he spoke, Medora was led in, bathed in tears, and wild and disheveled.

"Pity, mercy! He came against my will," she cried, piteously, as she tried to kneel.

"Vile wretch! I take no man's wife from him. You are as guilty as the daring thief who has crept into my palace to steal you away. Take them to the lower dungeon; put

each in a separate cell. We will decide their fate presently."

The two were dragged away, the slaves and attendants were dismissed, and again the moollah and the emperor were alone.

"Thus is my palace guarded," said the tyrant, in a voice terrible in its concentrated rage.

"There must be treachery somewhere," was the moollah's calm reply.

"There must. See that it be inquired into. If I discover any base intrigues in my harem, the guilty die, no matter what their station or rank."

"I will make secret and subtle inquiry, and report to your highness," said the moollah, who all the time was gnawed at heart as if by vultures.

"Do so. Remember, this evening at the third hour, the betrothal," reiterated the angry monarch; "let them show any foolish roeping or false coyness, and they share the fate of Medora."

The moollah prostrated himself, and went out, rage and despair in his heart.

"That I should ever have served that man," he muttered to himself; "that in my intense folly and apathy I should have yielded for life's sake to be the slave of such a he."

And he ground his teeth in passion and despair.

What was to be done?

The emperor's suspicions were aroused.

His furious vanity and self-esteem, too, were aroused at the discovery that the beautiful young slave, Medora, hardly worthy of a devoted husband's love, had been a young wife before she entered his zenana.

This was a kind of blow to arouse all the most ferocious passions in a Moslem monarch. Strict orders would not only be given to all the guards of the palace, but they themselves would keep a sharp look-out for their own sakes.

To carry out the terrible plans which surged in the young man's head required time.

Still, he could but try.

Bent upon trying the experiment, he left the palace without seeing the girls, and bent his way toward his own residence.

Here he once more assumed an European disguise, and wended his way to the house of John Bowen.

Here, in a small room, he found the three friends assembled.

They had reached the city on the previous night, and had been awaiting him impatiently ever since.

His gloomy brow, his blank and cheerless aspect, did not tend to raise their spirits.

"What fatal accident overthrew our plans yesterday?" asked Ashurst.

"The suspicious caution of the emperor. Unfortunately, events have made him even more cunning and suspicious," was the answer.

And the moollah explained.

"Then there is no hope?" cried Lionel.

"None that I can see," murmured the captain.

"Hope ends only with death," said the moollah, moodily. "I have a last resource."

"What is that?" asked Ashurst.

"Insurrection. There is in Tangiers a large and easily-inflamed fanatical mob. Let it be got forth that the emperor is about to wed three Christians, and their furious and ignorant passions will be aroused."

"Easy to start such a rolling stone, not easy to stop it," said the soldier, dryly.

"We have no other hope," continued the moollah. "The seeds of revolution are ripe. In addition to the stupid and ignorant fanatics, there is a large and powerful party who weary of the tyranny and sloth in which his majesty lives. They are quite ready to put the Prince Mirza on the throne."

"But will he consent?"

"We don't ask the consent of princes in revolutions in this country," was the dry answer.

"If they refuse, we chop their heads off and set up somebody else."

"But can we aid you?"

"Yes. You know that yacht in the harbor, which brought your foes hither?"

"Of course we do."

"You must, while the fray is going on, contrive, with the assistance of John Bowen, to select a cargo and secure it. In that we must take our flight."

"But are you sure of your insurrection?"

"Quite, of starting it. How it will end is another thing. As a rule, the palace always submits to a revolution."

"And the emperor?"

"It is usual to put out his eyes, and then confine him for life. I fancy your friend Prince Mirza would spare him the former cruel punishment. Though," said the young man, moodily, "I know not but what he deserves it."

"Does the prince know?"

"Nothing. He will be the last to be made aware of the movement," said the moollah; "as soon as his friends are in motion, he must go with the stream or perish."

"When would you advise us to seize the yacht?" asked Ashurst.

"To-night, and remain on board. If Sir Thomas Harcourt or the earl come on board," he said, with a terrible and withering scowl, "detain them; I authorize you to do so."

And with these words he retired to give his final orders to John Bowen, who was delighted at the prospect of undoing some of the evil which he had unwittingly done.

The moollah then returned to his home, and, in his sacred garb, began a round of visits to the more humble priests of the fanatical party.

By innuendoes, by hints, by warnings, he prepared their minds.

They would hear of a great blow to their religion on the morrow.

Then he obtained an interview with some of the leaders of the young Morocco party, and prepared them for the eventualities of the morrow.

The volcano was slumbering.

It required but a torch to start the combustion.

At eight, the then hour of the night, the moollah returned to the palace.

The betrothal of women in the position of our heroines was a mere theatrical ceremony, but the Orientals are very partial to it for that very reason.

The moollah, with slow and weary step, approached the harem to prepare them.

He found the entrance blocked by the swarthy guard, and entrance refused him.

The emperor waited his presence in his lesser hall of audience.

What could this portend?

The moollah was on the rack. He had sown the storm, and would surely reap the whirlwind.

But the great question to his mind was, had he been betrayed? If so, he had but to meet his fate with serenity.

Any way, he would be spared the agony of witnessing the sufferings of the three unfortunate girls.

Assuming, however, the most extreme se-

renity, and even joyousness of manner, the young man entered the private audience chamber.

He saw that the emperor was in one of his worst humors; his brow was dark and lowering, his eyes menacing in the extreme.

As soon would the young moollah have faced a Numidian lion.

"Where have you been?" asked the monarch, in a voice hoarse with passion.

"Preparing, your most sublime highness, for the betrothal and the marriage," said the priest, in as firm a tone as the others, but still quite respectful.

The emperor growled out something which was quite inaudible, and then waved the moollah to a seat at no great distance.

They were alone.

"Oh, moollah Hafiz," began the emperor, with a stern and haughty glance, "I have, very much against the advice and wishes of many, raised you up to a pitch of rank and favor never before enjoyed by a renegade."

"I have been faithful to your majesty to this hour," said the priest, in slightly quivering accents—he was conscious of a little Jesuitry in his reply.

"You have. But—may your father's grave be defiled—you have taught me to drink wine, the abomination of the prophet! I must have a bottle," growled the despot.

The moollah bowed.

It was not for him to say that the emperor was a determined drinker, and was glad to have an ex-Christian for a boon companion.

The wine was brought.

"Now, oh moollah," continued his imperial majesty, when he had warmed his heart somewhat with wine, "in your old country—the country of infidels and yahoudis—what do you with women who fall off from their lawful lords?"

"The very rich," said the moollah, gravely, "obtain, by a long and tedious process, a separation from their unfaithful spouses—who then, if their lover is disposed, they marry."

"Long and expensive process!" cried the emperor, with blinking eyes. "No bowstring, no sack?"

"The man who took his wife's life, under any pretense, would be hanged," replied the moollah.

"Can such things be? Why, the Christians are greater fools than I thought them," cried the amazed emperor. "You said the rich—what do the poor do with their bad wives?"

"I have heard," replied the moollah, with intense gravity, "of their inflicting the punishment of the stick upon them, while others have well thrashed them until they have had black eyes."

"But they do not put the infamous creatures to death?" roared the emperor, savagely.

"And, your highness, if a man in Europe takes to himself a second wife—a pretended second wife," continued the moollah, "his wife can take him before the cadi, and have him punished."

The emperor looked at the moollah anxiously, to see if he was not taking leave of his senses.

"Wallah!" he said, "you would not have me believe this—where are your laws and your prophets?"

"Such are the laws made by the rulers of Ingelterra," was the answer.

"It is horrible to believe such folly and wickedness," cried the despot; "and now, before we make any final arrangements about the English hours, what shall be done with the vile Medora and her paramour?"

The moollah tapped his head, and reflected deeply.

"Most high and mighty potentate, sublime ruler of the universe, I will tell you my idea."

"Speak at once."

"To-morrow, after your marriage, it will be well to let the new beauties of the harem know what dereliction from duty means; let them witness the punishment of the slaves."

A cruel smile passed over the countenance of the emperor.

The suggestion was one after his own heart. Still, his suspicious nature was not wholly to be lulled to sleep.

"Strange things have happened in the zenana of late," he said; "people come and go, I am told, who have no business within its precincts."

"Your highness must surely be misinformed," began the moollah.

"I hope so. But see that nothing of the kind occurs before to-morrow. I have resolved to make these northern hours my partners, if twenty malignant stars intervene."

He had imbibed "considerable of wine" by this time, and was in a peculiarly defiant humor.

The moollah, with white and quivering lips, bowed and took his leave.

Should his schemes fail, terrible indeed would be the retribution which would fall upon himself and friends.

But as soon as he was alone in a distant chamber, he drew himself up, and stood erect and firm.

"The man—tyrant, despot and voluptuary as he is—has been to a certain extent my friend, and my heart bleeds for him. But, rather than immolate these girls to him, he shall die, even by my own hand."

His face was white, the muscles quivered convulsively, but in another moment it was rigid and determined.

"Perish a hundred men, so that no harm comes to them!" he said, and moved stealthily toward one of the many secret corridors which surrounded the harem, and which, in his cups, the emperor had made known to him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ON THE VERGE.

"At last," cried Kate, who, with her companions, was now immured within the prison walls, "we are wholly abandoned and deserted. Everything turns against us, and even the moollah falls away."

"I do not believe it," said Edith, warmly; "if he does not come, it is that he is prevented by a power over which he has no control."

"You know his mysterious promise," said Mrs. Bacon; "it appeared to me to be wrung from him by despair. Still he will do his best."

"I hope so," observed Jessie, sadly; "but still more and more do I feel that dull depression, that gloomy foreboding which has attacked me recently."

"Nerves, my dear girl, nerves. In no manner or form is it given to us in this world to foresee events one hour before they come. Second sight, warnings, mysterious appearances, are all moonshine, figments of the brain, the means by which rogues obtain power over fools," cried Mrs. Bacon, warmly.

"Mrs. Bacon, I am not a fool," said Jessie, equally hotly, "and I do believe supernatural hints."

"Nonsense, my child; you are, naturally enough, bilious and out of sorts. But the great scheme of this mighty universe is not all put out of order to frighten or reassure one poor soul."

The young Scotch girl would very likely have made a sharp retort, being somewhat given to believe old wives' tales, and having a fervent mind that reveled in the notion of bogies and private family ghosts, but that at this moment several women entered, bearing large piles of rich and magnificent costumes.

The discipline of the harem being maintained on the coercive principle, and the coercion taking the form of heavy-heeled slippers, a stick, bowstrings and sacks, resistance to an arbitrary order was out of the question.

The girls were compelled to submit to the exigencies of the toilet.

The shawls, gawses, head-dresses and other appurtenances of their new costume were simply superb, and would, under other circumstances, have excited their admiration.

But cold, blank despair crushed their souls, and embittered within them every natural and feminine sympathy.

They were, as usual when making the slightest change in their costume, taken to the bath, where they were subjected to an ordeal not much different from that which we endure in this country in the name of a Turkish bath.

After this had been gone through, the gorgeous raiment was put on, and the ladies were offered a repast worthy of their coming rank and fortunes.

"Never before," cried the impetuous Kate, "did I understand what it was to be a caged bird. Never, if we escape from this den, will I see a poor linnet or other feathered prisoner without releasing it."

"And yet they say that 'stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage,'" observed Mrs. Bacon, forever trying to do the cheerful and consoling.

"Whoever wrote those lines knew little of human suffering or sorrow," exclaimed Edith. "Give me the meanest hovel in all England—a laborer's cottage, only let me be free to come and go."

Several richly-habited slaves and guards now entered, preceding the empress-mother.

She strode in haughtily, and with a dark and malignant scowl upon her features.

All her plans were failing.

The tool, Medora, whom she had dazzled with a vision of imperial glory, had fallen a prey to the vagaries of human affection and manly love.

The blind and insensate passion of the emperor was driving him headlong to a course which the old lady conceived would strengthen the already powerful party who were in favor of European intercourse and reform founded on European notions.

All four rose to receive the imperial lady.

She seated herself, and then sent away all but a frail Italian girl, a new interpreter, who had taken the place of her who had been so cruelly murdered.

"You are arrayed as if for a bridal," was the first sarcastic remark.

"What shall we do?" cried Kate.

"Are you willing brides?" asked the Italian girl, quietly.

"No, ten thousand times no; death in any shape were welcome to us rather than this wretched sacrifice."

The empress was told.

A cold and dumbing smile wreathed her lips, as if she could not credit even Feringhee girls with such folly.

"Now then—at the last moment then," she inquired, "you are willing to run some danger to escape?"

"We will endure any risk," answered the girls, by the mouthpiece of Mrs. Bacon.

The empress spoke for some few minutes to the Italian girl.

"There is," said the young person, turning to them, with something like a shudder, "a secret way of escape from the palace. It is known, as a rule, only to the reigning sovereign, and has been used only when revolts rendered a sudden departure necessary."

"We understand," replied Mrs. Bacon, noticing that the other hesitated slightly.

"But the empress has twice, in time of civil war, been carried that way; his gracious majesty had once to flee for his life."

"The way?"

"Is under the castle through winding vaults to the seashore on the side of the mole."

"But, once there, what could we do?" asked Mrs. Bacon.

"There are many Christian boatsmen about, and several foreign vessels in the harbor," retorted the interpreter.

Mrs. Bacon and the girls conferred.

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McKay looked confused, and turned away his head to cover a look of anger.

"I will try what I can do for you with the chief," he said; "but I fear I shall plead in vain, as he seems bent upon keeping you."

"You have been hospitably received under my father's roof, sir," said Helen; "and you will make but a poor return if you will not do anything to save me from disgrace and shame."

"What would you do to free yourself from the hands of Darromed?"

"Anything—everything."

"Then would you reconsider the refusal you gave me at your father's house, a year ago?"

Helen instantly arose and looked at him with a fixed gaze, which caused him, in spite of his effrontery, to turn a variety of colors, and swear inwardly.

"You would take advantage of that, then?" she said, slowly. "A gentleman—at least one who deserved the name—would have thought twice before offering an insult of this kind to a woman in my situation. You ask me to marry you, as you asked me once before, and I refuse."

"Remember where you are," he said, harshly. "You may need my help to get you out of the hands of Darromed, and I am likely to refuse it if you retain your present opinions. An insult! What do you mean, girl? It is no insult I offer you—I, a gentleman high in social rank and in the army, and you the daughter of a penniless subaltern in the Yankee service."

"You have said enough, sir, and my answer is given. I must beg you to leave me to myself as I am not desirous of your company."

"I am afraid you do not know me," he said, slowly. "You may drive me too far, and force me to show you what my power really is. There are worse fates than to be the wife of even so poor a man as Colonel McKay."

"Yet I will dare them all, sir, in preference to such a fate. Leave me at once, and keep your plots against the unhappy whites of the north-west. There is blood upon your soul, sir—the blood of the many unfortunates who have been slain in this cruel and useless war. Unborn thousands will know your history, only to execrate it bitterly; and McKay will be a bugbear to frighten children with in the after-times."

The colonel grated his teeth harshly together, and he made a half motion to raise his hand, as if he would have struck her. It was well for him he did not, for Handy Pat was standing not far away, and the expression of his face was anything but pleasant. If McKay had looked at him he might have had good cause to doubt whether he had a very safe servant in the Irishman. But Pat controlled himself, and approached them with a benignant smile.

"That's right, masher. Phat business have she to talk that way to a colonel in the service av the king? Shrike her wid yer fist av she looks at ye that way ag'in."

This good advice had the effect the Irishman intended, for it drew the wrath of McKay to himself, and turning, he bestowed a buffet upon the unhappy Irishman which "brought the claret" from his nose in a plentiful stream. "Sorra receive the hand av ye!" growled Pat. "Phat did ye hit me fur?"

"To teach you to attend to your own affairs, you rascal. Interfere with me again and I will give you up to Darromed, and let him use you as he intended."

"No, thank ye. I don't care about it at all, av ye please, fur the Injin don't look swate at me, seeing that I bate his hid at the island fight. Don't hit me ag'in, because I don't like it."

Pat retreated, and McKay followed, full of wrath. He had made but little headway upon Helen, and was satisfied that she despised him as much as ever. Two years before he had bowed his pride to make an offer of marriage to her, when he was forced by a wound he had received by accident to make an asylum of her father's house, and had been refused so promptly that he had not the courage to renew his offer. Whether he had set the Indians to attempt her capture and follow her so persistently, she was still in doubt; but she knew that he was a man of great determination, and rarely gave up anything upon which he had set his heart.

The Irishman was in a quandary. Satisfied that his former master needed him, for the present he felt himself safe, but he had no guarantee that he would not deliver him over to the tender mercies of the British officers when they reached the post. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that he did not care about staying under his new master any longer than was absolutely essential to his own safety and well-being.

"Now see, masher," he said. "Will ye tell me where we are goin'?"

"Silence, your stupid tongue!" commanded McKay. "It is enough for you to know that you are to obey me, and the first token of insubordination will be the signal for me to throw you into the hands of the Indians or of the troop from which you deserted."

"Sure ye wouldn't do that same, masher dear!" howled Pat. "I got tired av staying in wan place so long, an' I thought I'd thry this side av the line a bit. A poor gossoon like me ain't answerable for what he does."

"I want you to understand my orders, then. You are to watch that young lady night and day, and see that she does not escape. If you should be unfortunate enough to permit her to do that, you may as well drown yourself, for I shall have no mercy upon you."

"Deed an' I don't think you would, masher dear," growled Pat. "I'll watch her; sorra time will I take me eye off her till she's safe wherever ye want to take her."

"Very good; see that you keep to that idea and I will make it worth your while. I am a very good fellow as long as you do not make me trouble, and when you do, I am one of the worst men in the world. I have set my heart upon a certain object, and I intend to accomplish it."

McKay strode away, leaving poor Pat standing like a statue, staring after him, evidently greatly troubled because he could not hit him.

"Oh, yis; a nice man ye ar, av I do say it phat shouldn't. I'd like to be at a tay-party wid two or three jist such blag'ards as ye be, alannah! Who, it hurts me till the soul av me that I don't dare to throw a stone at ye, an' I'm to watch Miss Helen, am I? Deed an' I'll be the finest watcher ye ever had till av."

Pat scratched his head and considered. "Now Masher Clinton is off, I dunno phat I'll do. Who! How it scared me whin he wint over the hill on the black horse! It's him that can do it, anyhow. An' thin, there's Gilbert; phat the devil is he, anyway? An' the rid hythen, Owasco; a fine lad. I'll be the de'th av that blag'ard av a Darrymid wan av these days, sure."

McKay had been in close consultation with Darromed, and now came forward again and spoke to Helen. "I have interested myself in your behalf," he said, "in spite of your cruel-

ty to me. But, as I told you, it will be useless for me to try to get you out of his hands, except in one way."

"You need not trouble yourself to tell me what that way is, sir," she said. "I think I can fathom your shallow plan."

"Still I must state it. If you will say that you are my wife, I can claim you from him, and he will give you up."

"Your wife; yours?"

The expression of utter detestation in her tone was so bitter that all the blood in McKay's veins seemed to turn at once to gall, and he seized her fiercely by the wrist.

"Mad girl, do you know what it is to drive me to despair? I warn you, as you value all you hold dear, to think before you dare insult me again. I have told you that I love you as a man addressing a woman, as humbly as I can. You have only replied by insults, and I will not endure it. Now then, listen to me. You have looked your last upon your home, you have seen your father for the last time, unless you consent to go back as my wife."

"You are not in earnest?"

"You will find it so."

"Then," said Helen, turning her eyes with a piteous gesture in the direction of her home, "dear father, farewell! Now, sir, I am in your hands, but remember that I come of as good blood as you, and our race prefer death to dishonor."

"What would you do?"

"Kill you, if you dared to lay a hand upon me. Look!"—she produced a small but keen dagger. "My lover gave me this, the man I am to marry, and in whose love I glory. Do you know who he is? The man whom to-day your red miscreants thought to hound to his death, but whom God in His great mercy and providence preserved so wonderfully. He escaped, and while he treads the earth you are not safe."

"Give up that dagger," hissed McKay.

"Not I. Come and take it, if you dare."

He advanced, and she struck at him with such deadly earnestness that it was only by an agile spring backward that he saved himself from a severe wound. As it was, the point touched his breast, inflicting a slight cut.

"Vixen!" he screamed, livid with passion; "I believe you would take my life if you could."

"If a rattlesnake coiled itself to strike its fangs into your flesh, you would slay it, would you not?"

"Ugh," said Darromed, who was looking on.

"The white girl has a brave heart, and I love to see her raise her arm to defend herself."

"I did not ask your opinion, sir," replied McKay, in an angry tone. "When I do, it will be time for you to interfere."

The chief answered only by a haughty stare, while Handy Pat lifted one leg from the ground and indulged in a pantomime which might have brought condign punishment upon him had his master seen him.

"This haughty temper of yours shall be brought very low," said the colonel, again addressing Helen. "In the mean time, get into yonder canoe and I will follow."

"Where am I to be taken?" she demanded.

"You will know when you reach it. I am not in the humor to answer the questions of one who does nothing except insult me. But beware; you shall surely be my wife, or a worse thing may happen to you."

With a look of lofty scorn Helen took her place in the canoe, and once after another four Indians followed with paddles, while McKay and Pat made up the number; and under the strokes of the paddles they shot rapidly down the stream. McKay took out a little Union Jack and elevated it upon a ramrod in the stern of the canoe, so that the savages, by whom the banks were lined, could not mistake them for enemies.

Scarcely had they disappeared beyond a bend in the river when Morena appeared, and Darromed was delighted that she had not come in time to see Helen and Pat.

"The woods are full of braves," she said. "Do the Indians mean to strike at Big Whirlwind?"

"Big Whirlwind will meet the fate of other white chiefs who have come into the country of the Shawnee and the Wyandot," replied Darromed. "Before a sun has gone over your head he shall sleep in a bloody grave."

"So will many braves of the nations," she declared. "I pray you do not stir up the warriors to battle, for they cannot beat the Big Whirlwind as they have beaten St. Clair and Harmar."

"You will not believe that the nations are strong. They are not alone, for their brothers, the British, will give them aid."

"Why should you change masters?" she asked. "What the Americans want the red-coats will also demand. McKay is a snake in the grass, and his heart is full of evil. If you had heard the words he has spoken in the ears of Morena you would no longer trust him."

"Ha; did he insult Morena, Queen of the Lake?" he cried.

"It is well that I was not by with a hatchet in my hand," hissed the chief. "He would do well to be careful, for the blood of a chief is warm and may grow warmer."

"Are the chiefs determined upon battle?" she persisted, still eager to find out what they intended to do.

"Yes; the nations cry out for war. But first we must put the fox asleep, and so we speak kind words in the ears of the white men, and when they are lulled to rest, the nations will come down like a flood."

Morena, by a series of skillful questions, made out that the attack would not be many hours deferred. Then, as she turned to go away, she remembered something.

"Chief," she said, coming quickly back, "you know what I wear about my neck. It opens like a watch, and inside are two pictures, a man and a woman. Ever since I can remember I have worn this. Will you tell me from whence it came?"

"Wagh!" cried the chief, angrily. "When had Morena so long a tongue! It is yours, and that is enough for you to know."

"Why should I not know?"

"Be silent, Morena, or you will arouse the great wrath of Darromed, whose heart has been kindled against you for many days. Say no more of the pictures, or I will tear the bawls from your neck and cast it into the water. Does it seem well for a daughter of the Wyandots to love the pictures of those of the accursed race?"

"Some of the blood flows in these veins, how much I do not know," replied Morena. "And when you say you will take this picture from me, you know that you dare not; for your life you dare not!"

She stood like an enraged pythoness glaring at him, one hand firmly clasp the barrel of her carbine, and the other stretched out in a haughty gesture. Cowed by her manner, Darromed was silent, and shortly after she left the camp, to carry Wayne the intelligence which put him upon his guard against the Indians. After she left the camp she met an Indian who

was in her service and who told her exactly when the fight would begin, and under her direction he lighted the fire upon the hill-top which commanded a view of the battle-field. During the sanguinary conflict she stood upon the hill, looking down upon the strife, her fine face expressing her sorrow.

"Why would not my people listen, why would they not remember that my knowledge was greater than theirs? See, they fly before the disciplined men of Wayne, and there will be wailing to-night in the villages of the tribes," she said, unconsciously.

"Then the tribes should hear reason when it is spoken," said a quiet voice at her side. She turned and saw that Owasco had come up the hill, and with her was looking at the battle.

CHAPTER XXI.

A GENEROUS DEED.—MORENA AT MIAMI.

"HAVE you found her?" cried the chief, eagerly, "or is she still in the hands of Darromed?"

"Darromed did not have her a few hours ago unless she was hidden somewhere, for I was in his camp. But, let me give you a guide, so that you may know which way to go. Darromed is a snake in the grass, but he has another friend, even worse than he. Have you heard the name of McKay, on the river?"

"Ugh!" was the guttural exclamation.

"See you how the blood of the red-man is flowing yonder? McKay is the cause, and I will not forget it. He it was who stirred up the Indian to fight against his white brothers, and now the power of the tribes must be broken."

"I have no fear that the white man will be beaten, and it is better so. The tribes must know their master. See, see!"

The Indians were broken and flying in wild disorder through the woods. They heard the charging cheer of the legion, and caught glimpses of their blue uniforms and bright bayonets flashing through the cover. A cloud of fugitives ran along the river bank in wild dismay, while some cast themselves into the stream, preferring rather to meet that fate than to feel the steel of their pursuers.

"We must away," cried the Onondaga. "My life would not be worth one of the shining coins of the white man if I stayed."

"Go, then," replied Morena. "I have no fear of the coming Indians, for they know that I am a true friend."

Owasco turned and ran rapidly up the stream to a point half a mile above the scene of the battle, and sitting down in a place where a screen of bushes hid him from the view of those upon the other bank, he waited anxiously.

When he escaped with Gilbert from the toils of the savages, into which they had been led by the treachery of McKay, he had been compelled to make a detour in order to get away from them, and when he considered himself safe, none of his party could be seen, nor had they answered his signals, and he was forced to believe either that they had perished or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. He had turned back because he found the country full of Indians, advancing to the rendezvous of the Rapids, and he knew that the great struggle was about to commence, but he had not come in time to join it.

Sitting concealed under the bushes, he was aware that a man in ragged and bloody attire was crawling down the opposite bank. In spite of the mask of blood and filth in which he was enveloped, Owasco knew his enemy, Darromed. After launching the poisoned arrow at Gilbert, he had made a circuit, and passing through the rear of the Americans, gained the bank of the river. There was something horrible beyond description in the savage chief in his blood-stained garb, and he was evidently half-maddened by his misfortunes. He did not pass long upon the bank, but plunged boldly in, and when he appeared upon the surface, swam vigorously toward the very spot where Owasco lay concealed. The Onondaga loosened his hatchet and knife, and prepared for a desperate encounter, for he knew that Darromed would be no easy prey.

The Wyandot reached the bank at last, and drew himself up slowly, evidently in great pain. Owasco then for the first time saw how badly wounded he was, and the generous heart which beat in his red bosom would not suffer him to assail a wounded man. But he lay quiet, while the chief slowly ascended the bank, when he sprang up suddenly and appeared before him, with his hand upon his hatchet.

Darromed uttered a low, guttural cry, and looked at the Onondaga with a glance of fire, as he slowly drew his knife from his belt.

"Renegade dog!" he hissed. "You have stood upon the heights to laugh at the destruction of the greatest plot the Indians ever framed; you, whose skin is red but whose heart is black; you, who should have stood by my side, fighting against the enemies of your race. Come to me, and I will give the crows to peck at you. You are a coward! Who hang in my lodge with the scalps of those who have fallen in battle bravely; I will tie a stone to it and sink it in the depths of a black river, for it is not worthy to hang beside brave men's."

"Your blood has flowed fast and you have lost your mind, or you would remember that I have fought with you before," answered Owasco, quietly. "No, I am not a fool, neither am I a coward. When you are strong enough to fight, I will meet you, and teach you what it is to meet the wrath of an Onondaga chief."

Where is Helen, the girl whose face is fairer than the Night Spirit, whom you stole away? Do I not say you are a coward! Who ever dared to face Darromed in his anger? Where the white girl is I know, but you must dig deep into my heart to find the secret out. She is far away, and nevermore shall the white man gaze upon her, never hear her voice, sweet as the music of running water."

"You must tell me!" replied Owasco, firmly.

"The secret is here," replied Darromed, beating upon his breast. "Come and find it."

Owasco began to grow angry. He knew that at any time he was a match for Darromed, but now, when the Wyandot actually trembled from exhaustion, he had the game in his own hands. But it did not accord with his ideas of honor, and he restrained himself by an effort.

"You talk like a child," said he; "as if I could not see that your blood is flowing. Ha! put down your hand. If you touch the bow I will kill you like a dog."

Darromed had upon his back a small steel bow, and at his side four or five arrows, thrust into a thick leathern sheath, with the points downward. Once or twice he had attempted to take down this bow, but as often was restrained by the menacing attitude of Owasco. The Onondaga, knowing the nature of the chief, understood at once that the arrows were poisoned, and that the slightest touch was death if in any part of the body, mutilation if in a limb.

He saw that nothing but quick action could

save him, and darting in, he threw his right arm about the body of the chief, pinning his left arm to his side. As they went down together, he snatched the little quiver from the side of Darromed and flung it into the stream. The victory was even more rapid than he had hoped, for Darromed had not been aware how very weak he had become from loss of blood, and he was but a plaything in the hands of his foe. Before he had time to think, his only remaining weapon, his knife, was wrested from his grasp, and he was a prisoner in the hands of Owasco.

"Why don't you strike?" he screamed.

"Why are you a fool, when you should be wise? I am the man who hates you, the man who to-day took the life of Gilbert, the Guide."

"Take care!" hissed Owasco, gritting his teeth. "If I thought that true, I would bury my knife to the hilt in your heart."

"It is true! The poison of the rattlesnake is in his veins. Ah, ha!"

"I begin to see blood before my eyes," muttered Owasco. "Dog, if you speak true, the death I will give you will be terrible. Say once more that you have slain him."

But Darromed was silent. The last flash from the eyes of Owasco had cowed him, and he dared not speak.

"Answer!" cried Owasco. "Have you lied?"

"Yes," replied Darromed.

Owasco took out the buck-skin thongs from the leggings of his prisoner, and tied him securely. One of the poisoned arrows had dropped out upon the earth, and he picked it up, looking at it curiously. Then, with anything but an agreeable expression upon his face, he sat down by the chief.

"I want to know where the white girl is, and no man can tell so well as Darromed. Will you not speak?"

"Owasco is a fool," was the reply.

"Yes. Owasco is such a fool that he wishes to see how poison works upon the flesh of a Wyandot. It is a strange thing that a little stain upon a steel-point is enough to take the life of a man. See! I am going to prick you in the face."

"No, no!" screamed Darromed, for the first time showing fear; "do not touch me."

"You are caught in the net you set for others. Tell me where Helen is, or I will touch you."

"She is with McKay, the red-coat agent," Darromed confessed. "I speak true words, and now take away the arrow."

Owasco did nothing of the kind, but kept moving the horrible weapon backward and forward over the nose of the terrified chief, who actually turned livid with affright.

"What must I tell you now?" he cried. "Take it away or you will touch me."

"It is good!" persisted Owasco. "I have found one thing that Darromed fears. Where has McKay gone with Helen?"

"Down the river, and then to Detroit," replied Darromed.

"Good! Does he want her for his wife?" demanded the Onondaga.

"Yes. Take away the arrow."

"I will lay it down; and when I think you are lying to me, you are a dead man. Where is Waterman, the agent?"

"He escaped. He rode a wild horse over the Council Bluffs, and got clear."

"Where is Pat, the Irishman?"

"He is with McKay, to wait upon him, because he ran away from him long ago."

"And where is Gilbert the Guide, the friend who has been true to me so many years?"

"I do not know," answered the chief, sullenly; "he is a dog, and I hate him."

Owasco took up the arrow and approached it to the cheek of the bound man. But the chief did not flinch. He knew that if he acknowledged the death of Gilbert it would be his own passport to eternity.

"Are you telling me true words?" demanded the Onondaga, sullenly. "If you lie, you die upon the spot."

Darromed said nothing; and with a guttural laugh the Onondaga cast the arrow into the stream, cut the bonds upon the limbs of his prisoner, and assisted him to arise.

"Go!" he said. "An Onondaga cannot strike an unarmed man, and one who is wounded. We shall meet again."

Now that the prospect of a horrible death by poison had passed away, the chief was himself again.

"Kill me!" he said, offering his breast. "I do not fear death by the knife or the hatchet, and I will not take life from your hands."

"You must!" Owasco spoke, scornfully.

"I warn you that I will never rest until you are dead, if you let me go."

"I care not; I will not strike you. Go in peace, and wait for the time when you will be strong enough to meet Owasco in battle."

For a moment Darromed stood before his enemy, his fierce eyes glaring living fires; and then he turned upon his heel and struck off into the pathless forest with slow, hesitating steps.

Owasco looked after him a moment, and then struck his trail, which he followed with patient vigilance through the woods.

Morena remained upon the headland watching the fugitive Indians. Some of them recognized her in passing, and their faces showed that they remembered her counsels for peace, and they felt that they would have done well to listen to the Queen of the Lake, now that it was too late. She saw among them men who had been kind to her, as kind as was possible in men of their stoical natures, and she felt grieved for them, but knew that the lesson was a salutary one, and that they would not forget it.

She was thinking of Gandelion, and the words he had spoken when they last met. She believed that he loved her; but, understanding the difficulties under which he labored, with sublime self-devotion she had determined to cast him off if he came to her and spoke of love again. She would not drag him down, but leave him to work out his future as he might, unshackled by her love. For she did love him; all the strength of her pure young heart was in the passion, and she felt that for such a man it would be glorious to die.

"Who am I?" she murmured. "My heart tells me that I am not all an Indian, and that I was born for a better life than this. No matter; whatever may come to me in the after years, I am glad to think I have done some good to my kind. This beautiful girl, Helen, will not leave me. She is in McKay's power, and I must and will take her from him. I know that he set them to seize her, but where has he taken her?"

She sat for some time in silence, with her head bowed upon her knees, lost in thought. Then she arose, and saw that the shades of evening were gathering about her; and not caring to spend the night alone in the woods, advanced at a rapid pace, and soon saw the walls of Fort Miami rising against the evening sky. A party of Indians, scattered about the beach gave way at her approach, and she passed through, greeting them kindly. A canoe

lay upon the beach, and entering it, she paddled boldly toward the other shore, and landed just below the work. A sentry challenged her, and she gave her name, not having the word.

"There is the corporal," said the soldier. "I don't know whether he will pass you in or not."

"Colonel McKay would pass me if he heard I was waiting," she declared. "Let him know that Morena wishes to enter."

"The colonel is not here," replied the man, respectfully. "Corporal!"

A soldier, holding that grade in the service, came up, and seeing who it was, passed her at once.

"I suppose you do not know that Madame Legrange is in the fort," he said. "She came up from York* with the last regiment to Detroit, and came from Detroit yesterday. I've got orders to admit you at once, for she longs to see you."

Morena uttered a little cry of delight. Madame Legrange was the lady who had taken so much pains to teach her, and who had earnestly entreated her to give up the tribe and become her daughter. But Morena regarded it as her duty to be faithful to the tribe, and had refused.

The garrison was all under arms as they passed in, for Wayne still continued hostile demonstrations outside, and they did not know but the fiery leader might take it upon himself to assail them.

The open space within the fort was full of armed men, and among others, she saw the broken force of Canadian militia which had aided the Indians against Wayne.

Several small houses had been built under the walls for the accommodation of the officers. The corporal entered one of these, and knocked at an inner door. A lady who was within sprang up as they entered, and with a cry of joy caught Morena in her arms and pressed her to her heart.

"I am glad to meet you again, my darling," she said. "How could you stay away from me so long?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 235.)

DAKOTA DAN,

THE RECKLESS RANGER;

OR,

The Bee-Hunter's Excursion.

ed away in a straight line northward. The trained eye of the young bee-hunter was enabled to follow it some distance; and as it disappeared from sight, a smile of satisfaction lighted up his youthful face.

"A pretty good 'line,' I am sure," he mused; "but here is another bee—two, three of them."

Sure enough, three more bees had settled upon the bait, and Ruben at once imprisoned them under his cap. When he removed the covering, he found the bees busy in the cells of the comb; but, one by one they came out, rose up, and having circled around the spot, flew away. Two of them went in the same direction as the first one, and the other in an opposite course.

Ruben arose, secured his bait, and started away to 'line' the course taken by the three insects. He moved quite rapidly for some distance, when he slackened his speed and began searching for his bee-tree.

Experience had taught him that the wild bee usually made its hive as high from the ground as possible; and that the eye alone could not be depended on entirely, as the height of the insects or the dense foliage concealed them from view, as they passed in and out of their hive. As their homes are always made in a hollow tree, the bee-hunter first selects a tree whose outward appearance bears evidence of inward defect. Then he makes the circuit of the tree, glancing carefully along the body for the entrance of the hive. If failing in discovering any hole, he places his ear against the trunk of the tree, and if the bees are active, and his sense of hearing is acute, he can generally hear a dull, buzzing sound vibrate along the body of the tree.

Ruben finally came across a large tree whose lower parts showed signs of inward decay, but the foliage was so dense that he made no attempt to test its secrets by the eye, but at once applied his ear to the body of the tree. He started, and a cry of delight burst from his lips. Up among the foliage he could hear the buzzing of myriads of wings quite distinctly. He could not see the bees, however; nor was he positive that they were in the tree under which he stood. There were other large trees standing near, and even mingled their boughs with those of the one first selected, and should he make a mistake in the tree, as he was liable to do when depending entirely upon the ear, it would cause a great deal of confusion and unnecessary labor when it came to securing the honey. To determine this, the youth extended his search still further. A novice would have become discouraged with half the pains already expended by young Gregg; but the youth felt amply rewarded for his pains, when, upon searching among the moss and leaves for other evidences of the true bee-tree, he found a number of dead bees, some small bits of honeycomb, and other matter usually expunged from the hive of an active and healthy colony of bees.

Being satisfied now that the tree under which he stood was the right one, Ruben walked out a few paces from its trunk and circled around and around it, until he finally discovered the place where the bees entered the hive. He now made a survey of the surrounding vicinity in order to familiarize himself with the locality and select the best place to fall the tree. As this was usually done after night, when convenient to camp, it was highly necessary that the hunter make all his calculations so there would be no delay, nor trouble of lodging one tree in another.

The youth having thus made his calculations, took out his knife and cut a perpendicular gash in the bark of the tree on the side on which it was to be fallen. Under this he cut his own private mark, so that other hunters could not lay claim to the tree and its treasure. His day's work thus completed, he started on his return to camp.

A low, soft whistle, full of meaning, suddenly arrested his attention.

He stopped and gazed around. He caught sight of the figure of a man standing half concealed in a clump of shrubbery not far away. At the same instant he saw the man's arm sweep through the air—he heard something come clapping through the leaves—something blurred his vision, and with a groan he sunk unconscious to the earth—stricken down by the hand of a hidden foe!

CHAPTER XIII.

A REVELATION.

THE sun stood upon his noontide meridian, and poured his warm rays down upon the glimmering bosom of the Keya Paha and the camp of the bee-hunters.

Eager, expectant eyes watched either shore from the little barricade, expecting each moment the return of the five hunters that had gone out in the morning.

Soon they began to drop in one by one until four had come. Ruben Gregg was still absent. An hour went by and he came not. Grave fears for his safety were now being written upon every face; and there was one pair of watchful eyes in the camp that filled with tears—a pair of lips that quivered with some deep emotion. These were Edith Dufford's.

Soon after the departure of the five bee-hunters in the morning, Dakota Dan, Jonathan Duncan, Edith and Melitable were safely lodged in the camp of their friends.

Edith's heart beat joyously in the expectation of meeting Ruben. The time and circumstances under which she anticipated their meeting, would be a happy and joyous surprise to him. She was bitterly disappointed, however, when on arriving at the island, she learned that he had departed but a few minutes previous.

With all the impatience and anxiety of youth, she watched the sun creep slowly up the heavens. It seemed to her as though noon would never come, and that at times the sun stood still. But at length the hour for her lover's return came, and when the others came in and he did not, her heart grew sad with disappointment and fear.

Dakota Dan had astonished the bee-hunters with the intelligence that a large party of Sioux were in the vicinity, and upon the war-path with a vengeance. And had the party all been present at the time, measures would have been taken for an immediate return to the settlement.

In fact, those at the camp talked the matter over, and resolved, with the concurrence of the others, to return home as soon as the party came in. But the non-appearance of Ruben defeated all their calculations. They would not go off without him, or a knowledge of his fate.

So they waited until he had sufficient time to get around, in case he was not in trouble, or had ventured further away than had been consistent with the time allotted him, and not having made his appearance, parties were sent out in various directions in search of him—Dakota Dan and his dog Humility being the first to leave the fort.

The afternoon was passed wearily, uneasily and anxiously enough at the island. To Edith,

the uncertainty that hung over the life of her lover became almost agony itself.

Ishmael Searle, the commissioner, excused himself from partaking in the search for Ruben, upon the grounds of his ignorance of the lore of the border. As he could make a full hand, however, in defending the place, he felt that he would be no incumbrance there, and so decided to remain.

He saw that Edith was in trouble about Ruben, and endeavored to console her grief without compromising a knowledge of the source of her sadness. But Edith had little to say to him, or to any one, in fact.

It was evident to the observing Jonathan Duncan that Ishmael Searle was enamored with the maiden, and was endeavoring to draw her aside that he might engage in private conversation with her. At the same time, it was also evident that Edith managed to evade the commissioner, as if she anticipated his object.

Duncan himself had also proved a source of annoyance and uneasiness to Edith, nor was he entirely ignorant of the fact. He had, quite frequently, permitted himself to be caught studying her features in a solicitous manner. He was trying to compare the features of the maiden with those of the picture taken from him by White Falcon; and the longer he gazed at her the stronger became his conviction that she was the child of the Lonsdales.

During the afternoon, he gained the opportunity to say:

"I beg you will pardon my seeming want of manners, Miss Dufford, in staring you out of countenance. But, if you will give me a minute's private conversation, I will explain why I have done so, and may tell you something to your advantage."

Edith breathed freer now; she granted the interview, and walked with Duncan to the opposite side of the little fort.

"First, I wish to inquire, Miss Dufford, whether or not your parents are living?"

Edith was surprised by the question. It was so different from what she had expected that she felt herself disappointed. She had hoped that he had something good to tell her of Ruben—or at least, some idea to advance regarding the youth's prolonged absence from the camp. In a tone that was indicative of her disappointment, she said:

"They are not living."

Had Edith been looking at the man, she would have seen the corners of his mouth twitch, and a light of satisfaction and delight beaming in his eyes.

"Have you relatives living at Niobrara?" he questioned.

"I have an uncle," she replied, wondering whether she was committing herself in a manner that would some day bring her sorrow and trouble.

"Then you live with your uncle?" Duncan pursued.

"I do."

"Is he your father's or mother's brother?"

"Mother's."

"Is he an aged man?"

"He is about fifty, I believe."

"Was he a boatman on the river before he came to Niobrara, or at any time in his life?"

"He may have been, though I can not answer for certain."

"What is your age?"

"Nineteen," Edith replied; "but I am sure," she continued, "I confess my ignorance of what you desire to learn, or find out, by questioning me concerning my friends."

"You will please pardon me, Miss Dufford, if I decline for the present to tell you more than this: I am searching for the lost heir or heiress of a large Eastern estate, and have thought, with good grounds for it, too, that you are the person I am looking after. However, I do not wish to compromise myself further, for fear the rightful individual, whoever that may be, would be defrauded, if the object of my search becomes publicly known. Still, I have every reason to believe, Miss Dufford, that you are the individual. If you will grant me another interview, after the trouble and uneasiness consequent upon the absence of the young bee-hunter is settled, I will make a detailed statement of facts to you. It is not probable that you can fully establish yourself without the concurrence of your uncle and aunt, as there are incidents—links in the great chain of evidence—which only they can supply."

A puzzled, reflective look settled upon Edith's face. In all her life she had never heard the slightest intimation of what Duncan had hinted to her; and but for the positive assurance of the man, the earnestness and honesty of his face and tone, she would have believed he was trying to deceive her for some purpose or other. Even as it was, she thought he was mistaken in the person he was in search of. She knew her uncle and aunt were honest people, and would keep nothing of her parentage concealed from her, through evil motives.

Having promised Duncan another interview, the two separated and mingled with the rest of the party.

Duncan assured himself that what had passed between him and Miss Dufford had been unheard by any but themselves inside of the little defense. But in this he was mistaken. The keen ear of Ishmael Searle had drank in nearly every word of their conversation. And soon after the interview had ended, the commissioner was seized with a strong desire to go out and aid in the search for Ruben, and as no one urged any serious objections, he immediately took his departure.

"Lord!" exclaimed Jonathan, aside to young Hobart, "I wish Dakota Dan was here now. I'd have him follow Ishmael Searle to the end of the world!"

"Why so, Mr. Duncan?" asked Hobart.

"There's something wrong about that man."

"Do you wish to insult me, Jonathan Duncan?" Hobart asked, firing up with resentment.

"Mr. Searle, sir, is a gentleman, and—"

The report of a firearm came through the woods, cutting short the conversation between Hobart and Duncan—calling their attention in the direction of the sound.

CHAPTER XIV.

DAN MAKES A DISCOVERY.

WHEN Dakota Dan and his dog left the island in search of Ruben Gregg, they moved briskly and silently away through the forest in the direction that Ruben was supposed to have taken.

The ranger had left his mare on the opposite side of the river, free to roam at will and feed upon the green herbage of the woods.

Dan was satisfied that the young bee-hunter had fallen into the hands of the Sioux, if he had not been shot down in the forest. As he proceeded along, the ranger kept his whole attention fixed upon the movements of his dog, which was allowed to precede him. He knew the keen scent of the dog would not fail, where his own sight would, in detecting the trail of the red-skins, were there any in the vicinity. In this he was right. As they moved along, the dog suddenly gave a low bark, then with his nose close to the earth he began frisking

hither and thither, his body half-crouched upon the ground.

"Struck it, by Jude! ar'n't ye, old dog?"

The dog looked toward his master and wagged his tail. Dan stopped and reconnoitered the surrounding vicinity, but could detect no sign of enemies about. He turned his attention to the movements of his dog. The animal had stopped and was sniffing around a certain spot in a manner that told Dan he was off the trail. Advancing to where he was the ranger saw the cause of Humility's queer actions. There was a pool of blood upon the ground and leaves, and this had denuded the scent of the animal and prevented him from following up the trail of the red-skin.

The blood was coagulated, although it had not been long shed, and a careful examination of the surroundings convinced him that it was the very spot where some person had fallen under a blow. He found innumerable moccasin tracks in the soft soil around the blood, and among these was the unmistakable imprint of a white man's booted foot. This surprised Dan. It was now evident to him that some white man who had not discarded the foot-wear of civilization, had had a hand in the affair that shrouded Ruben's disappearance in mystery.

Dakota Dan was not the man to allow such a matter to pass idly. He carefully raked the old leaves aside in order that he could see more perfectly the shape and outline of the foot. He found it so plain and sharply defined that there was not a single doubt as to its exact size, and cutting a slender stick, he measured the length of the track, and its breadth; he charged his memory as to its shape, and made a mental calculation as to the probable height of the man by the indentation of the foot.

This done the ranger led his dog away from the blood, washed his muzzle at a little stream hard by, then circled the spot where the man had fallen until the dog again struck the trail of the departing red-skin. He knew, by frequent drops of blood along the way, that it was the trail of the party that had the wounded person in custody. But to his surprise, he discovered that the booted foot was not among those of the red-skins. He shook his head dubiously, while a vague suspicion rushed across his mind—the suspicion that some of Ruben's own friends had been accessory to this murder, if murder it was.

He had followed the trail two or three miles when Humility suddenly came to a stop, and crouching his whole form upon the earth, glanced back at his master, then thrust his nose between his paws and moved his tail in a slow, serpent-like motion.

"By Jude! he pints danger; the game's in sight! Steady now, ole Tri-angle."

He stepped aside and concealed himself in a dense clump of bushes, calling Humility to his side.

A few minutes later a white man came from the west and paused within a few paces of where Dan was concealed. It was Ishmael Searle, the government commissioner!

A few minutes later he was joined by the notorious renegade chief, White Falcon!

It was evident that they had met by appointment.

Dan bent his head and heard Searle ask, as the chief drew nigh:

"Well, did you get him secured?"

"Yes, he's where he'll not be found soon again. He's come to his senses, and has quit bleeding. Lord! you must have given him a terrible jolt on the head. But how's matters at the island?"

"Complicated."

Dan ground his teeth and gripped his knife till the bones in his fingers fairly cracked.

"Dakota Dan and Jonathan Duncan, with the women, are there, as I told you before."

"I overheard Duncan talking with Edith, and he appeared to be pretty well satisfied that she is the right person. Dakota Dan is out looking for Gregg, as are others of the bee-hunters also. By keeping a close look-out, you may capture them; and every one killed or captured of course will weaken the defense of the island."

"To be sure it will," mused Dakota Dan.

"You can't kidnap the girl, then?" White Falcon asked.

"No," responded Searle, "I figured the question in every possible way, but there is no chance whatever. She is too closely guarded. The only hope lays in storming the defense. In that way we could get Duncan himself, perhaps; if so, we may force him to reveal all that would be of importance to us in this matter."

"Well, what then?" questioned Donald Gray.

"Then, if I cannot induce Edith to wed me, we can keep her in custody, and substitute an heiress that would favor our plans."

"That's so, Searle," replied the chief.

"You are a deep one, Ishmael—as scheming as you are deceiving. Hat ha! ha!—Ish Sorrel a Government commissioner! That is a good one. What a set of blockheads these Niobrarians must be to let themselves be taken in by such a man in such a manner! But I'll bet you could keep it up all fall, and they wouldn't be any the wiser for it. They don't know more than the man in the moon who are agents and who are not."

Dakota Dan fingered his rifle nervously, and but for the presence of two-score of savage warriors but a short distance away, he would have put an end to the existence of the two white fiends. As it was, he was compelled to forego all hostile demonstrations; but he felt amply repaid by what he had heard, and chuckled to himself in anticipation of what was to come.

"You're complimentary, Donald," Searle replied; "very complimentary. But see here; you keep your tools scouring the woods for those fellows that are now out, and I will return forthwith to the island and keep an eye and ear open for the programme of the bee-hunters. If I should have a voice in the proceedings, bet your life I'll make it to our advantage. That old Dan, however, is likely to be the chief spokesman and head-center of the party, and it will require great caution and skillful head-work to outwit him. But, as I was going to say, I will meet you to-night about the time the moon rises at— Well, you say what point?"

"You'll have to leave the island in a canoe, won't you?—well, then drop right down the river, and I, with an escort of warriors, will meet you in a canoe in the middle of the stream, opposite the mouth of Rattlesnake creek. We can hold our conference there, certain that no prying ears will hear what is said. You want to make certain of the movements of the bee-hunters; the strength of their camp; the location of the women's tent; and the most accessible point for an attack. Just so we get the girl and Duncan into our clutches, the latter dead or alive, is all we need trouble ourselves about."

"Well, then, let it be understood," replied Searle, "that we meet on the river about the hour the moon rises. I'll have to study up an

excuse between now and then, in order to get away from the island without being suspected."

"Oh, that'll be no trouble for Ish Sorrel to do," replied Donald Gray, with a low, wicked laugh.

"Then again let it be understood that we meet at moon-rise on the river, opposite the mouth of Rattlesnake creek."

"Yes; at moon-rise, opposite Rattlesnake mouth," repeated Gray.

"Just so," mused the old ranger, rubbing his hands with delight, and chuckling in glee; "just so, my birds of Paradise. At moon-rise, on the river opposite the Rattlesnake's mouth! Well, I'll admit I don't like Rattlesnake's mouth, but never mind; I'll meet ye there, my brace of worthy, weemin' steal'n cavaliers; bet yer gizzards on't, I will. Oh, yes! Dan-el Rackback 'll be there, and onto his musel, too."

Without further conversation the two plotters, Searle and Gray, separated, each one going his way.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 240.)

Sports and Pastimes.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

PREPARING FOR 1875.

NOTES of preparation are now to be heard in the professional camps for the great battle of 1875, although the season for making fresh engagements is not yet arrived. Last year quite a demoralizing effect was produced among the existing professional nines, owing to the course pursued by several players of the professional nines of 1873 in signing agreements to play with other club nines, before they had closed play with the clubs they then belonged to. To put a stop to this evil, the Professional Association at their last Convention, in March, 1874, adopted the following rules, governing the contracts between clubs and players. The rules in question will be found in Beadle's Dime Book of Base-Ball, in Rule Third, sections 4 and 5 of the playing rules of the game, and are as follows:

PLAYERS VIOLATING CONTRACTS.

SEC. 4.—No player who is under an existing and valid contract to play base-ball with any club belonging to the Professional Association shall be allowed to play in the nine of any other club of the Association in any regular match game until the contract has been duly canceled. And any member who shall, while a legal member of a Professional Association club, bind himself to serve as a player in any other professional organization—whether belonging to this Association or not—shall forfeit the entire amount of his salary, or be liable to expulsion from the Association, at the option of the Association Judiciary Committee, before whom the case shall be heard.

AGREEMENTS TO BE IN WRITING.

SEC. 5.—No contract between club and player shall be deemed valid, except it be signed by the player who is engaged, and the President or Manager of the club which engages him; and except, also, it be signed by two witnesses, one for each party.

Now it matters not whether the club a player belongs to be either a mere co-operative club or a regular stock company organization, so long as he signs a written contract he is bound by the above rules.

Not being aware of this fact, Burdock, Higham and Carey of the Mutuals signed to play with the Hartford club in 1875, and having previously signed written agreements to play with the Mutuals in 1874, of course their contracts to play with any other club until after the expiration of their term of service for 1874, were null and void. Moreover, they render themselves liable to expulsion from the Association if the case should be brought before the Judiciary Committee, a very serious result to a professional player nowadays.

PROFESSIONAL NOTES.

Among the players now out of the market are the following: White, Spalding, O'Rourke, Barnes, Schaffer, George Wright, Leonard, H. Wright, McVey, and Beals, who have all signed contracts to play with the Boston club again in 1875.

Mathews and Start have signed to play with the Mutual club in 1875.

Mills and Tipper are to be retained in the Hartford club.

It is rumored that Ferguson will captain the Hartford nine in 1875, and that Bond will be their pitcher.

Al Wright, the secretary of the Athletic club and their old scorer, has been engaged as manager for the St. Louis Base-Ball Association, the new professional club of the West.

Searns and Hastings are to join the new Chicago nine.

Pike is to be one of the new St. Louis professional team in 1875.

The Boston and Hartford clubs both decline to play on Sundays during their visits to St. Louis, and the new organization just formed there will also prohibit its nine from playing ball on Sundays. This shows that the new club is not to be controlled by gamblers; if it were, they would go in for playing on Sundays or any other day of like character.

Professional club managers make two great mistakes in their selection of nines. First, when they take into their service men who have been open to suspicion of fraudulent play; and again, in selecting players who can not work harmoniously in harness together. They apparently only look to the mere playing skill in home positions, when it is very essential to consider a player's character, habits, associations and disposition.

THE BEST GAMES OF SEPTEMBER.

Thirty-eight professional games were played during September, and of these the following were marked by the finest fielding displays, as the small scores show:

Sep. 26, Mutual vs. Chicago, at Brooklyn.....	2 1
Sep. 23, Athletic vs. Philadelphia, at Phila.....	3 2
Sep. 24, Chicago vs. Athletic, at Philadelphia.....	2
Sep. 3, Baltimore vs. Chicago, at Baltimore.....	5 1
Sep. 28, Mutual vs. Atlantic, at Brooklyn.....	5 1
Sep. 10, Boston vs. Athletic, at Philadelphia.....	5 4
Sep. 8, Mutual vs. Chicago, at Brooklyn.....	6 2
Sep. 22, Philadelphia vs. Hartford, at Hartford.....	6 2
Sep. 15, Mutual vs. Athletic, at Brooklyn.....	6 3
Sep. 12, Dan vs. Boston, at Boston.....	9 1
Sep. 3, Philadelphia vs. Chicago, at Phila.....	7 2
Sep. 3, Mutual vs. Hartford, at Hartford.....	7 2
Sep. 6, Athletic vs. Hartford, at Hartford.....	7 8
Sep. 10, Hartford vs. Chicago, at Hartford.....	7 8
Sep. 7, Philadelphia vs. Chicago, at Phila.....	7 6
Sep. 22, Chicago vs. Athletic, at Philadelphia.....	7 6
Sep. 25, Boston vs. Baltimore, at Boston.....	9 1
Sep. 21, Athletic vs. Atlantic, at Philadelphia.....	9 1
Sep. 30, Baltimore vs. Hartford, at Hartford.....	9 4
Sep. 31, Atlantic vs. Boston, at Boston.....	9 8
Sep. 24, Atlantic vs. Hartford, at Brooklyn.....	9 8
Sep. 22, Mutual vs. Boston, at Boston.....	9 8

The general average for the month was fourteen and over, the average of the winning nines being 9 and 15 over, and of the losing nines 4 and 20 over.

CHICAGO GAMES.

The record of games played in the professional arena in 1874, in which one side failed to score a single run in a match, or were what is technically termed "Chigaged," is as follows:

By the Boston Club.

May 8, Boston vs. Baltimore.....	14 0
May 20, Boston vs. Philadelphia.....	3 0
July 9, Boston vs. Atlantic.....	14 0
Oct. 2, Boston vs. Atlantic.....	29 0

By the Mutual Club.

May 30, Mutual vs. Atlantic.....	2 0
Aug. 31, Mutual vs. Atlantic.....	4 0
Sept. 1, Mutual vs. Hartford.....	14 0
Oct. 6, Mutual vs. Athletic.....	3 0

By the Philadelphia Club.

April 22, Philadelphia vs. Baltimore.....	13 0
June 1, Philadelphia vs. Atlantic.....	10 0
June 4, Philadelphia vs. Mutual.....	9 0

By the Chicago Club.

May 13, Chicago vs. Athletic.....	4 0
Aug. 29, Chicago vs. Baltimore.....	4 0
Sept. 14, Chicago vs. Boston.....	10 0

No other clubs were successful in similarly disposing of their adversaries up to Oct. 15.

"YONKERS."

Among the record of defeats in which the beaten nines scored but a single run—known as "Yonkers"—we find up to Oct. 15 the following games:

June 8,	Mutual vs. Chicago.....	38	1
Aug. 26,	Philadelphia vs. Atlantic.....	23	1
Oct. 3,	Mutual vs. Baltimore.....	17	1
June 20,	Boston vs. Hartford.....	15	1
Sept. 9,	Mutual vs. Baltimore.....	15	1
Sept. 13,	Chicago vs. Hartford.....	14	1
Sept. 25,	Boston vs. Baltimore.....	14	1
Sept. 21,	Athletic vs. Atlantic.....	9	1
July 8,	Chicago vs. Baltimore.....	9	1
June 8,	Hartford vs. Atlantic.....	8	1
June 8,	Mutual vs. Baltimore.....	8	1
May 13,	Boston vs. Hartford.....	8	1
May 7,	Athletic vs. Philadelphia.....	7	1
Sept. 2,	Baltimore vs. Chicago.....	5	1
Sept. 28,	Mutual vs. Atlantic.....	5	1
Oct. 2,	Mutual vs. Baltimore.....	4	1
June 26,	Mutual vs. Chicago.....	3	1
July 18,	Chicago vs. Philadelphia.....	3	1
Sept. 25,	Atlantic vs. Chicago.....	3	1

ONE THING AND ANOTHER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

How very strange some words will run
When thrown in measures run!
The very worst or perfect tune
Has naught to do with tune.
You can not call a fighting cur
By any means a collier.
And thoughts which people might infer
Can not be called infernal.

A man who's caught out in the rain
Can not be called a ranger;
And he who suffers from a strain
May never be a stranger.
The man who bears aloft the flag
Means no harm that is flagrant;
And though my meanings may be vague
It is no sign I'm a vagrant.

The man who sleeps upon a bank
Not always is a banker;
But gentlemen of wealth and rank
Are sometimes filled with rancor.
Where'er a warrior feels blue
It's no sign he's a Blucher,
And he whose hopes and fears are few
Cares little for the future.

The good acts which a person does
You might count by the dozen;
But would you call an o'harry cuss,
Though relative, a cousin?
A woman for her daily need
May turn into her needle;
But I don't think a cousin Bede
Was e'er elected needle.

Because you hold a magic wand
It's no sign that you wander,
And if you fall into a pond
It's no sign that you ponder.
The man who robs a funeral pyre
Might sure be called piratic;
The buying of a hat that's new
Can not be called pneumatic.

A man might sleep upon a stoop
And not be in a stupor;
But then the man who builds a coop
Don't always be a cooer.
The man who always shows his ire
Might have no nerves of iron;
But if you heed your thoughtful sire
You'll not be caught by siren.

The man who deals before a bar
Is often forced to borrow,
And when sweet things will turn to sour
They fill us most with sorrow.
Well, well, these puns if you shall con
Will make you quite a conder,
And if you can but make out one
Why, that will be a wonder.

"Tricking" the Kiowas.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

"WHAT under the sun does that mean?"
These words came from the lips of a young
man who, in company with three comrades,
abruptly drew rein and cast keen, inquiring
glances around them. Upon every hand
stretched the broad, level prairie, guiltless
of tree or irregularity as far as the human eye
could reach. Nothing save the floor-like level,
extending, apparently, to the horizon upon every
side.

And yet significant sounds came to the ears
of the four travelers. The rapid, confused
tramping of horses' hoofs; the faint, distant
yell, now single, now swelling in chorus.

And all this without a living soul in view.
For some moments the hunters glanced at
each other, their superstition aroused. But
then the eldest of the party—a bony, grizzled
specimen of humanity named Jack Gavin—
laughed shortly.

"Four fools in one outfit—reckon we'd better
sell out! In co'se thar's a step-off out yender."

The other hunters stared at each other
sheepishly. Well acquainted with that por-
tion of the country as they were, it was curious
none of them had divined the mystery be-
fore. They remembered now that the vast
expanse of country between them and the
Rocky Mountains was one series of gigantic
plateaus, one raised above another, like the
steps of a staircase. As a general thing, these
descents are almost perpendicular, and may
not be noted until one is within a few hundred
yards of the verge. Such was the case just
now.

"You fellers 'tend to the critters," muttered
Gavin, as he dismounted. "I'll snake up an'
see what's goin' on. Thar's Injuns down thar,
an' I reckon they're jest havin' a high-daddy
time, too!"

The old trapper glided forward for nearly a
quarter of a mile, then crouched still lower
and crawled on until he had gained the very
edge of the plateau. It was as he had reckoned—
there were Indians below, and they were
having a "high-daddy time."

Gavin cautiously turned and made several
signals to his comrades. In obedience to
them, the animals were led forward to within
a couple of hundred yards of the precipice—
for such it might fairly be called—then hobbled
and blinded. Secured thus the mustangs
would stand day in and day out without mov-
ing or making a sound.

This precaution taken, the quartette were
soon lying along the escarpment, their heads
well shielded with bunches of grass. And truly
it was a curious sight that met their eager
gaze.

Upon the level below there were full two
score savage warriors—Kiowas, as Jack Gavin
declared. From these had emanated the
suspicious sounds that arrested the tra-
velers.

Barely visible in the distance was the still-
smoldering ruins of a wagon-train. From
this had the Kiowas drawn material for their
unique sport.

Two gaudily-bedecked braves were urging
their snorting mustangs swiftly from each
other. To the tail of each animal one end of
a ball of brilliant-hued calico was tied. With
a sharp pluck the stout cloth was stretched
taut—then it parted near the middle. Yell-
ing and jabbering loudly, the riders gathered
up their pieces and carried them to a brawny
brave who, holding erect a long lance support-
ing the gory, ghastly head of a pale-face, evi-
dently acted as referee, for he compared the
pieces and gave them both to the brave who
had handed him the longest one. And then,
with variations, the division of the spoil was
continued.

"Look yender! a pettycoat, by ge-mently!"
abruptly muttered Gavin, pointing further up
the wall of rock.

Lying close at the base, the hunters now
distinguished two bodies—and one of them
was unmistakably that of a woman.

"Dead, I guess," ventured Harry Coon.
"No, I see'd her lift her head a bit sence."

They're captives. Poor devils! I reckon
they'd 'a' made money by bein' rubbed out at
once! like the rest o' the outfit. Them Kiowas
is born devils—they is so!"

"Can't we rescue them?" eagerly added
Harry.

"Four ag'inst forty, an' them forty Kiowas,
which is rip snorters in a ruse! We'd stand
jist about as much show as we would tryin' to
put out a weed prairie fire a-spittin' tobacco-
juice at it—no more."

"Reckon you can't see c'lar to-day, Jack,"
quietly interposed Foxy Chase. "Look back
o' them fellers a-squatin' down. Two bar's

an' three kaggs. 'F I don't miss my guess,
thar's gwine to be a bustin' old drunk 'round
hyar afore many hours. You hear me!"

"And then we will have a chance to steal
off with the captives?"

"Ef the varmints don't rub 'em out afore
blind drunk comes—yas," grunted Zack Hines.
"If the imps tries that, one will sing his
death song, anyhow," muttered Coon.

"We'll do the best we know how fer 'em.
But you mustn't spile things by bein' over-
brash. I'm in big hopes the corn-juice yender
'll make it a easy job fer us. The varmints
is sure to git drunker in biled owls, an'
s'posin' they don't rub out the captives
jist, the thing 'll be easy enough. All we
kin do now is wait," added Jack Gavin.

After this discovery, the time dragged wea-
rily enough to the four hunters; and whenever
an Indian moved nearer the captives, their
hearts throbbed fast and painfully, lest it
should be the signal for a tragedy they were
powerless to prevent.

"Don't believe thar's any liquor in the bar-
rels," muttered Coon, uneasily. "Tisn't in
Indian blood to keep from swilling for so long,
when whisky is so close and handy."

"Keep cool, boy," replied Gavin. "Kiowas
ain't fools. They wouldn't 'a' buck the trouble
to tote empty bar's so far, an' ef they'd
'a' emptied 'em sence, you wouldn't see so
much cute ridin' as is goin' on down thar.
Wait until they're done 'vidin' the drygoods
fust; then they'll wade into the wet groceries,
I reckon."

At length the sun set and night descended.
The Kiowas side-hopped their ponies and
turned them loose to feed. They gathered a
lot of brush and buffalo chips, and soon had
a huge fire blazing. The head of one of the
casks was knocked in, and the orgie began.

"We mustn't lose no time," muttered Gavin.
"Them imps may take a notion to hev some
fun wif the captives, when they git crazy
drunk. Get your laryis—'em together. Make
haste!"

Firmly knotting the rawhide lassoes to-
gether, the trappers crept along until directly
above the two captives. Then the rope was
made fast beneath Gavin's armpits, and he
was lowered to the level below. The captives
were evidently alarmed, but the old man
quickly reassured them.



With a sharp pluck the stout cloth was stretched taut, then it parted near the middle.

"I'm a fri'nd—we're goin' to git you out o'
this scrape, if you don't spile all by makin'
a rumpus. Thar—" as he severed their bonds.
"The gal fust. Don't be skeered, little one!
Thar's strong arms an' true hearts up yender.
They won't let ye tumble."

With these words he secured the lasso be-
neath the woman's arms, and gave the signal
to hoist away. The ascent was made in safety,
and the rope lowered for the man. Gavin
finally ascended.

The Kiowas were rapidly becoming drunk.
Bending over the fast-lowering liquor, they
swallowed huge draughts, ceasing only when
the fiery liquor took away their breath. It
was plain that they had eyes, thoughts for
naught else.

"Boys," abruptly said Gavin, "I don't keer
'bout walkin' when I kin ride. Thar's plenty o'
critters down yender. Who'll go wif me fer
a mount?"

"This beaver," grunted Zack Hines.
"Nough said. Lower us, you fellers. We'll
git critters an' keep 'long the wall until we kin
jine you. That way we won't lose no time."

Securing their weapons, the two men were
lowered over the wall, and within ten minutes
had picked out their ponies, severed their hoppers
and quietly led them away, unsuspected by
the drunken Kiowas.

Harry Coon rode beside the rescued maiden,
and before daylight had learned her whole
story. She, with her father, had been the only
ones saved from the massacre. The train had
been loaded with goods for the Chihuahuas
market, and in part owned by Hugh Davis,
who intended setting up a store at Durango.
This was the reason why Ella, his only child,
and sole living relative, accompanied him.

Just after sunrise the party were reunited,
and feeling secure from pursuit, knowing that
hours must elapse before the Kiowas would
arouse from their drunken stupor, they halted
for a couple of hours, and breakfasted. That
night's ride decided the fate of Harry Coon.
He fell over head and ears in love with Ella,
and made such good use of his opportunities
that, before the trading-post on the Arkansas
was reached, the two had decided to become
one, to follow life's trail together from thence
to the grave.

And, finding an itinerant preacher at the
Post, they were married without any more
ado. The reader must imagine the items—only,
it may be added, that Jack Gavin, Foxy
Chase and Zack Hines got "drunker'n biled
owls" by way of doing honor to the nuptials
of their loved comrade.

To Our Readers.—All who wish their
friends to enjoy the reading of Mrs. May AGNES
FLEMING's splendid serial story, "AN AWFUL MY-
STERY," will please have them call upon your news-
dealer for free copies of the GIFT NUMBER, contain-
ing the first chapters of the great novel.

Mr. Bessemer's Lesson.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"THERE is no use talking, Annie; we must
retrench. Expenses must be reduced."

Mr. Bessemer had been figuring diligently
for the last half-hour in his little memorandum-
book; and Mrs. Bessemer, with a pile of bright
worsted in her lap, from which she was
watching a slipper pattern, wondered what
ever could be so engaging to him.

Now, when he did speak, and so suddenly,
and, we are bound to admit, so crossly, and
shut up his little account-book with a small
slam, she looked up inquiringly.

"Our expenses are not very large, George.
At least I never considered them large."

"I dare say you don't. You women have
precious ideas of money affairs."

Just the tiniest suspicion of a quiver trem-
bled on Annie's lips; then she smiled brightly
at him.

"But you mustn't be cross to me, George. I
had no idea you were straitened in your busi-
ness; why have you never told me before?"

Mr. Bessemer gave a queer, indistinct growl,
then settled back in his chair, twirling his lead-
pencil between thumb and fingers.

"Well, I've told you now, at any rate, and
I'm sure I don't mean to be cross either. Only,
Annie, I can't afford to spend so much money
on so many unnecessary things as there are in
our house. I need all above our actual ex-
penses in the business."

"I thought business was good. There al-
ways seems plenty of people in the store when
I am there. Only, George, I wish you would
tell me what you mean by 'unnecessary ex-
penses.'"

Annie was looking very earnestly in her hus-
band's face; and there was a puzzled expres-
sion added to the seriousness of her pretty
brown eyes. Annie Bessemer was not an ex-
travagant woman, and she knew it perfectly
well. She was a capable, managing woman,
who could make a dollar go further than
many women could make two go, and she was
well aware of that, too.

So, what could George mean? He colored a
little under her quiet scrutiny before he an-
swered.

of him he couldn't tell; and then Annie went
out of the room.

It looked very strange; from French roof to
basement, there was no look of that delightful
coziness that characterizes home, and even
Mr. George Bessemer, whose suggestion had
wrought all the change, wondered, until it
suddenly occurred to him what was the matter.
Not a "gimcrack" visible. Not a tidy, a mat,
no mantle-cover, no card-receiver, no safe-pil-
low, no affghan in the parlor—all of them An-
nie's handiwork. Even the dainty straw-
framed prints had disappeared, and everything
looked prim and stiff.

In the dining-room it was as bad; but in the
bedrooms!

Not a sign of the toilet suits; no hair-re-
ceivers, no dainty swiss guards over the wash-
stands; well it *did* look queer, and bare, and
lonesome, but as he had said to Annie he fairly
hated the sight of them, thinking how much
they cost, he was not going to acknowledge
that he missed them.

"Well, Annie, how are you getting along?
how does your new girl do?"

Mrs. Bessemer smiled wearily, and her hus-
band took private notes of the fact that she
was unkempt and collarless for the first time at
their breakfast-table in the four years of mar-
ried life.

"I will see what I can make of her. She
broke the soup tureen in ten minutes after she
entered the house."

"You must expect some such little incon-
veniences, my dear. Be philosophical, and re-
member there is nothing so bad that might
not be worse."

"I remembered it, George, when she broke
the tureen. But when she spilled the contents
of the gravy-boat on your dress-coat, that lay
where you left—"

"Grease on my coat! on my dress-coat!
Where's the stupid fool? Where's my coat?"

Mrs. Bessemer, where is your management?"

"In a better place than your bump of order,
I am sure. Why did you leave your coat on
the lounge last night? I cannot go around af-
ter you and wait on you, George. Surely I
have enough to do; and you have as many
pair of hands as I."

Mr. Bessemer had no answer ready, and he
fell to eating his breakfast with a will.

She spied a door she never had seen before,
and tried to open it; finding it locked, she
turned to Mr. Williams. He blushed a little,
then fumbled in his pocket for the key he had
seen.

"It's pretty fixy for only men-folks, Mrs.
Bessemer, but it's very convenient and pret-
ty."

Annie opened the door, and saw—

A little room with one window, draped with
lace curtains looped back with blue ribbons;
a marble-top washstand covered with a china
toilet set; blue and white mats, and on the
wall, under the glass, and over the top of the
stand, a blue and white wall-guard.

Carpet to match the outer room covered the
floor, and a rug lay before the stand.

For the life of her Annie could not repress
a scream of laughter; the next minute tears
rushed to her eyes. Could it be possible George
wanted to practice economy and plainness at
home, and the while denying himself nothing?
And then she wondered if he did not intend to
make up for plain bills of fare at home by
delicious restaurant meals?

Annie felt strangely. She was wounded to
the very core, and yet—

Mr. Williams spoke suddenly:
"He bought them at a fair; and the pin-
cushion yonder."

Sure enough there was a pincushion, a per-
fect marvel of ruffles, lace and bows; and Mr.
Bessemer had hung it up by one of the loops
to the wall. It was full of pins, too.

But Annie had resolved on a lesson to her
economizing husband; and although it would
be a task of weeks, she determined to "fight
it out" on the line she laid down. In the end,
she knew she would convince him that she
was right, and not extravagant in "gim-
cracks."

It was six weeks after this that Mr. Bessemer
expected several friends in to spend an
evening; and, naturally enough, he took a
tour of the rooms to see how things stood. A
full blaze of light filled the room, and as he
entered the door, with Annie on his arm, he
stopped stark still.

"What on earth is the matter with that
arm-chair? What is that big black spot on
it? Patience alive! look at the *tete-a-tete*! On
both ends a similar place! Annie, has George
been in here with bread and butter?"

He turned severely to Annie as he spoke.

"Oh no; I don't allow that. I think it is
grease from your hair, dear. It used to be so
on the tidies every Monday."

"You take it coolly. Why, woman, the
furniture is ruined—ruined!"

"Of course it is ruined. I knew it would be
when the tidies were taken off."

He stared at her a moment, then walked
over to the mantel. It was marble, and in
the center were several small, dull brown
spots.

"What's that, I'd like to know? Perhaps it
is grease off my hair?"

Annie laughed.

"Oh, no; but you made the marks laying
down lit cigars. There used to be a silver
cigar-receiver, you know."

"Humph! What else have I done, Mrs.
Bessemer?"

He tried to be crushingly severe, but Annie
was not to be crushed.

"Not much in here—only this, on the piano,
where you have set down the lamp when I was
playing for you. The kerosene seems to have
stained the rosewood terribly."

"Bother the kerosene! don't I hate the
plaguy lamps! I'll have gas in to-morrow."

"I wouldn't, George. It'll cost a great deal,
and, besides, before I took away the pair of
scarlet mats from the piano, the lamp never
did any hurt—not in four years."

Was she quizzing him? Inwardly he shook
his head at himself.

"Come up-stairs a minute, George. I've
lighted the lamp, and I want you to see how
nicely the bed-rooms look."

She took his arm, and chatted merrily as
they went up, and then she led him deftly past
the bureau, biting her lips as she watched his
keen eyes alight precisely where she wanted
them to.

"Annie! what does this mean?"

He dropped her arm, and pointed to the
stained marble top, where there were a hun-
dred little rings of dull, dirty hue.

"Why, it must be where you've set down
your toilet-bottles. I declare, see how the
bottom of the bottles fits the marks."

She very innocently looked up in his face
that began to take on a curious, half-quizzical
look. Then he went across the room to the
wash-stand.

"Since I am on a tour of investigation, I
will see how many marks of soapbuds I have
left here. Humph!"

Sure enough, the wash-stand looked very
shabby; and the wall before it was spattered
in a thousand places.

He looked a moment; then half smiled.

"Well, I suppose I am to admit that gim-
cracks are cheaper than ruined furniture—eh?"

"Don't you find it saves the office things,
dear?"

Annie fired off her biggest gun so calmly, so
affectionately; but George started, colored
fairly red—purple, then, seeing the laugh ga-
thering in his wife's eyes, and on her saucy
lips, he collapsed suddenly.

"Beaten, with my own weapons, too! Lit-
tle wife, fetch out the pretties, and let's cover
up these tracks of my foolishness; and we'll
regard them flags of triumph for you."

He caught her in his arms, and waltzed her
around the room.

"I was wrong, Annie, and you were right
—you're always right. Your little orna-
mental articles not only beautified, but actually
saved money by keeping our furniture always
new. You will forgive me?"

"If you will take this as a peace-offering
for my having invaded your office."

She handed him the velvet slippers, laugh-
ingly.

"You dear little woman," he said, and tried
to catch her, but she was off to redecorate her
house before her guests came.

It was not Irish stew and rice pudding she
gave them for dinner; nor coffee and mackerel
for breakfast; and the very next day Mr. Bes-
semer searched for and found their old cook
and chambermaid. And instead of the seam-
stress he bought her a sewing-machine; so that
Annie sits and sings and sews as happy as a
bird.

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